







**THE  
WRITINGS OF MANKIND**









# The Epsilon Sigma Alpha Sorority

Authorized Text

## THE WRITINGS OF MANKIND

*Selections from the Writings of All Ages, with Extensive  
Historical Notes, Comment and Criticism, Giving the  
Customs, Habits, Characters; the Arts, Philoso-  
phies and Religions, of Those Nations  
That Have Contributed Most  
to Civilization*

By

CHARLES H. SYLVESTER

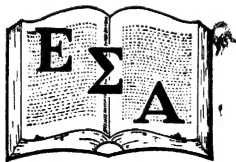
AUTHOR OF "ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE"  
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TWENTY VOLUMES

*Illustrated*

VOLUME SEVENTEEN

ENGLAND - AMERICA



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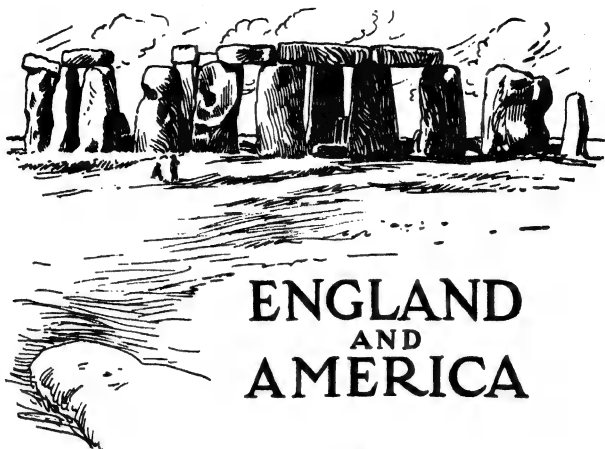
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# **ENGLAND AND AMERICA**





# ENGLAND AND AMERICA

## CHAPTER I

### ENGLISH HISTORY

**I**NTRODUCTION. English literature, according to our definition, includes all the literature that has been written originally in the English tongue, and comprises therefore not only the literature of the British Isles but also of English provinces and of the United States. Wales, Ireland and Scotland in the early days each had a literature of its own, but none was of sufficient importance to justify a separate treatment, a fact which can be understood from the references which will be made from time to time as the story proceeds. It might seem that the literature of the United States should be treated separately, but not only is it a literature in the English tongue, but it is so thoroughly English in all its characteristics that in a work like this, which considers the writings of all



tongues, the literature of America is really of minor importance. Such a statement need not be construed as a criticism of the excellent works that have been produced in the American Republic, for all have their places in the great structure which has grown out of the English tongue. Such modifications as location, dissimilarity of interests and the infusion of new blood have caused in America all will be considered duly in their proper places.

II. THE BRITISH ISLES. The British Isles lie off the western coast of Europe and are separated from it by the English Channel, the Strait of Dover and the North Sea. Lying between the parallels of fifty and sixty degrees north latitude, they are in the same latitude as Belgium, Holland, Germany, Denmark, the southern parts of Norway and Sweden and Central Russia in Europe, and, on the American continent, as the coast of Labrador. Owing to the waters which surround the British Isles, the climate is more moderate than that of other regions of the same latitude, and remarkably equable. Rains are numerous, and the actual rainfall, especially along the western coast, is very high. Here, too, the temperature in Southwestern Ireland is nearly as high as that of Central Italy. The British Isles have an area of about 122,000 square miles, with a population of 45,000,000, of which some seventy-five per cent are in England.

III. THE BRITISH EMPIRE. The British Empire is the largest in the world and covers

approximately one-fourth of the land surface of the earth, or something like twelve million square miles. These lands are distributed in all continents, and lie both north and south of the equator. The government of the various sections of the Empire varies considerably; some countries are directly tributary to the Crown, some are practically independent, while the rule in others varies from one extreme to the other. One of the remarkable features of the great World War was the loyalty of all sections of the British Empire to the mother country.

IV. ENGLAND. The most important member of the British Empire is England proper, which includes all the southern half of Great Britain excepting Wales, a small division lying in the southwestern part of the island. The history of the British Empire is the history of England, and English literature is the literature of England, so our studies narrow themselves primarily to the history and development of England and the English people. This remarkable country contains an area of slightly more than fifty thousand square miles, though it has a coast line of nearly two thousand miles. The inmost cities are only seventy-five miles from the sea, and all important manufacturing cities are less than fifty miles from a good harbor. Protected on all sides by the sea, England has rarely been invaded, and only a few times successfully. On the other hand, lying so close to the continent of

Europe, she has oftentimes held possessions in Normandy and other parts of France, and has always been affected by movements on the continent. Her accomplishments have been wonderful in all departments of human undertaking, but as a commercial nation she has achieved greatest distinction.

V. HISTORY. The history of England before the first century B. C. is practically unknown, and except that she had a rude population, which carried on limited commerce in tin with the Phoenicians, very few facts are available. In 55 and 54 B. C., however, England was twice invaded by Julius Caesar, and with those events the known history of England begins, though it was not for a hundred years that the Romans made a distinct effort to conquer the island. By A. D. 84 they had subdued all of the island south of the Firth of Forth, and thereafter for three hundred years they controlled the land, introduced Christianity and largely Romanized the people. In the fifth century, however, the Roman legions were withdrawn, never to return in power.

VI. THE ANGLO-SAXONS. Among the Teutonic, or Germanic, peoples were several tribes, among whom the Angles, Saxons and Jutes were the most prominent in their invasions and settlements of England; they furnished the largest ingredient in the blood of the English of later days and contributed the most important elements to the government of the land and to the language of its inhabitants.



**KING ALFRED STATUE  
WINCHESTER**



It is said that in A. D. 449 Hengist and Horsa made the first invasion of England, but later investigations have indicated that they were merely mythical heroes who typified the actual invaders who did appear at about that time, though it is doubtless true that many roving adventurers had ravaged the coasts long before. In all probability the Jutes were the first invaders, and they came from North Germany and possessed themselves of the Kentish coast, the Isle of Wight, and the nearby coast of Hampshire. When the Saxons, who had come from the shores of the Baltic and lower Elbe, arrived, they settled principally in the southern parts of England not inhabited by the Jutes. We have little knowledge of the Angles, whose identity in Europe is not well understood, but they located themselves north of the Humber and in the southern parts of Scotland, from which they worked their way inland and covered those parts of the island not previously occupied by their brother invaders.

As time went on, separate kingdoms were formed among the new settlers; there were at the beginning of the ninth century about seven of these kingdoms, namely, Kent, Sussex, Wessex, Northumbria, East Anglia and Mercia. These were constantly at war with one another, and from time to time one or another became powerful and ruled to a greater or less extent over the others. In 827, Egbert, King of Wessex, secured this sort of overlordship, and his

family retained its supremacy until the Norman Conquest, except during the comparatively brief periods during which the Danes ruled north of the Thames and later over the whole of England. Alfred the Great, of whom we shall hear more, was the most noted of the Saxon kings.

Among noteworthy characteristics of Teutonic rule were the continual increase in the power of the king and the establishment of the assembly called the *Witenagemot*, without whose sanction the king was not supposed to undertake anything of great importance; but, as a matter of fact, strong kings were often able to set aside the decrees of the Witan and rule arbitrarily. Even more important were the local assemblies, shire and hundred courts, which were instruments of local self-government, surviving the Norman Conquest and forming an important element in the English political system.

VII. THE NORMAN CONQUEST. About the year 1000 the Danes, under King Sweyn, invaded England and conquered it. Knut, son of Sweyn, became king of England in 1016, and for a generation England was ruled by Danish kings. In 1042 the Saxon line was restored in the person of Edward the Confessor, though his government was actually administered by Harold, son of Earl Godwyn, and after the death of Edward, Harold, though not of the royal line, was elected King by the nobles. His rule, however, lasted but a few months, for

William of Normandy, claiming the throne partly because of his relationship to the royal Saxon line and partly from a promise made to him by Edward the Confessor, invaded England in 1066, and at the battle of Hastings Harold was killed and the English defeated.

After the death of Harold, little resistance was made, so by the end of the year William had subjugated most of the island, and on Christmas day was crowned in London. For some years thereafter, however, there were rebellions and open resistance to the new King in many parts of the island. William's rule resulted in centralizing the power in the King, in destroying the great earldoms and in giving the lands in small and scattered fiefs to his favorite and influential soldiers, while he maintained a court for the trial of civil cases quite distinct from the old baronial court.

William II (Rufus) and Henry I both dispossessed their older brother Robert of the throne. William Rufus was killed while hunting in 1100 and was succeeded by Henry I, who refused to admit the claim of Robert. Unfortunately, Henry's son was drowned in the White Ship in 1120, and this led to a civil war, for Henry attempted to convey his throne to his daughter Matilda, but after his death, the barons objected to being ruled by a woman, and chose his nephew Stephen. This war was terminated by the death of Stephen, after which Henry II, son of Matilda, came to the throne in 1154.



VIII. THE PLANTAGENETS. Henry, Count of Anjou, and his family are known as the Plantagenets, from the habit the Count had of wearing in his hat a sprig of the *plantagenistae* (broom plant); but they are equally well-known as the Angevins, from the name of their county. Henry II was one of the greatest of the English kings, though he regarded as more important his wide possessions in France, which included practically the western half of that kingdom. In England he established an orderly and just government, but was opposed by the clergy, because he sought to bring the Church courts under the jurisdiction of the royal courts. Most determined in his opposition to Henry was Thomas à Becket, the archbishop of Canterbury, whose rebellious spirit it was impossible to quell, and who escaped to the continent and there fomented fresh opposition to Henry. Ultimately, however, even though the rebellious archbishop had taken refuge at the altar of the cathedral, he was murdered by some overzealous adherents of the King. The indignation in England was so bitter that the King was forced to do penance for the crime.

Between 1189 and 1199, Richard, familiarly known as the Lion-Hearted (*Coeur de Lion*), reigned, but little of his time was spent in his kingdom. We have already seen him in connection with the Third Crusade. John, his successor, was an able man, but unscrupulous and apparently devoid of the sense of honor.

Having quarreled with the Pope, he was excommunicated and deposed, whereupon he submitted and became the Pope's vassal. Having lost the province of Normandy to the French and excited the extreme antagonism of his subjects, he was unwillingly driven by his barons, ecclesiastics and subjects generally into signing the *Magna Carta* (Great Charter) in 1215. This famous document, the standard of British freedom, was executed at Runnymede; it pledged to the people the ancient laws and customs, the restoration to the Church of her liberties, impartial judgment to all, and to every man the right of trial by a jury of his peers. Many a time during the next centuries the English kings were compelled by their liberty-loving subjects to return in their government to the principles of the *Magna Carta*.

The greatest of the Plantagenets was Edward I (1272-1307), who accomplished the subjugation of Scotland in a contest where his chief opponent was the famous Sir William Wallace, and established many local reforms which increased the rights of the people and lessened the powers of the feudal barons. However, under the leadership of Robert Bruce, the Scotch won their independence at Bannockburn from Edward II, a weak and vacillating monarch, and were not again brought under English control for nearly three hundred years.

IX. THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR. When Edward III (1327-1377) came to the throne he was but fourteen years of age, and though

he felt that he might have some claim to the French throne, he paid homage for his French possessions to Philip VI. As we have seen, however, there were important causes of dispute between the French and English that resulted in a war between the two countries which lasted for about a hundred years. In this war the Scotch naturally sided with the French and endeavored to establish the heirs of Robert Bruce upon the throne, but the aid of the French king was neutralized by continental alliances which England was able to make. In 1337 Edward took up his claim to the throne, vigorously invaded France, called himself the King of that country, and won a decided victory at the famous battle of Crecy. Here his foot-soldiers, the wonderful English bowmen, distinguished themselves and established the importance of "infantry," as they were derisively called by the knights. The result of this victory, however, was little more than to give to the English the port of Calais and to permit them to return to their native land with heavy booty. However, ten years later Prince Edward, familiarly known as the Black Prince, invaded Northern France and won the great battle of Poitiers, captured King John and carried the royal prisoner to England. In 1360 a treaty was made which released John on the payment of a heavy ransom. The war virtually ceased during the reigns of Richard II and Henry IV, but was renewed by Henry V, for with the accession of that

monarch (1413) it was carried into France with renewed vigor. In 1415, after the capture of Harfleur, the terrible battle of Agincourt resulted in the defeat of the French, with enormous losses, once more largely owing to the skill of the English archers. By the treaty of 1420 Henry V was recognized as regent of France till the death of Charles VI, when the former was to become King of France. When Henry V died, his son was but a few months old, and when, a few months later, Charles VI of France passed away, the infant Henry was recognized as King in many parts of France and officially pronounced such in Paris. The Dauphin, however, did not yield his birthright, but made war upon England, in the successful prosecution of which he was indebted to Joan of Arc, of whom we have read at length in French literature. At the termination of the war, the English retained little excepting the city of Calais and, though not in so terrible a plight as the French, were still seriously handicapped by their prolonged struggle. At home England had been called upon to face the peasants' insurrection, commonly called Wat Tyler's Rebellion, which, although unsuccessful, was nevertheless a disturbing factor that was not eliminated by the death of the chief rebel. Of the religious revival which occurred at the same time under the leadership of John Wycliff, we shall speak later.

During the Hundred Years' War the English government went through a number of

changes in form, Parliament became thoroughly established, and in 1341 the House of Commons was finally separated from the House of Lords. Social conditions had changed; serfdom was breaking down, and the political power of the nobles was declining through the growth of government. The plague which entered England in 1348 and killed perhaps half her laboring population, resulted in bettering the condition of the remaining laborers, as it made the demand for their services much more insistent, so that, although England was so long in the throes of the expensive war, she nevertheless made steady progress.

X. WARS OF THE ROSES. The end of the Hundred Years' War found the English throne weakened and tottering, but many of the private citizens of England had amassed great wealth through commercial enterprises, and the age which followed was one of merchant princes carrying their commerce into far distant countries. The Church officials, too, had become accustomed to luxurious living, but all the lower classes were impoverished and struggling for bare existence. It was now the middle of the fifteenth century, and two rival houses became claimants for the throne of England. The House of Lancaster, taking for its badge a red rose, and the House of York, whose emblem was a white rose, gave to their contests for the crown the significant title of the Wars of the Roses.

Henry VI (1422-1461), lacking military virtues and unpopular by reason of his foreign marriage, was blamed for every mishap of his reign and, as for a long time he had no heir, it was generally supposed that Richard, Duke of York, an able man, would soon succeed him. On his father's side, Richard traced his descent from a younger brother of the great grandfather of Henry VI, while on his mother's side he had even stronger claims to the crown. In 1453, after armed demonstrations against Henry VI had begun, his wife gave birth to a son, and as the King soon after became insane, Richard, Duke of York, was appointed regent. However, the King soon recovered his sanity and displaced Richard by the Duke of Somerset, under whose guidance England had lost Normandy. Richard, fearing destruction, rallied all the discontented nobles of the realm to his standard, and set out for revenge against Somerset. Speaking generally, the north of England was Lancastrian, while the south, especially London, sided with the Yorkists. At St. Albans in 1455 the Lancastrians were defeated, Somerset was killed, and the trouble seemed at an end.

Meanwhile, Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, afterwards known as the "Kingmaker," a remarkable organizer and a man skilled in diplomacy, claiming his life to be in peril, remained in open rebellion, and by 1460 the strife was again general. A battle which seemed unimportant was fought at Northamp-

ton, and to the surprise of all the King was captured, and the Duke of York, instigated by Warwick, laid claim to the crown. Here the trouble seemed again to be quieted by means of an agreement in which it was provided that at the death of Henry the crown should pass not to his son, but to the line of York. Queen Margaret, however, not satisfied that her son should be deprived of the throne, boldly championed his cause. The Lancastrian adherents flocked to the standard of the red rose, and in December, 1460, she lured the Duke of York from his castle to his death at the battle of Wakefield. It was one of the most cruel and heartless combats in English history. No quarter was given by either side, and fugitives were slain barbarously by the victors. The dead Duke, however, had friends in plenty, and they gathered about his son Edward and won a partial victory against the forces of the King. In the meantime, Henry VI was rescued from Warwick, and young Edward of York entered London and was crowned in 1461. Soon after, in two terrible battles, he completely scattered the Lancastrian forces, and by the execution of captive nobles, whose heads were displayed on the walls of York, established at least a temporary quiet in his kingdom. The royal family, however, escaped to Scotland. Now there appeared to be two kings in England, and not one of the nobles was safe on either side. Minor battles occurred at intervals until 1465, when Henry VI was

captured in hiding and imprisoned in the Tower of London.

By this time Edward IV had fallen into disfavor by reason of many unkingly acts, and Warwick, deserting his cause, allied himself to Queen Margaret, who had by this time obtained aid from France; by means of their allied strength the incompetent Henry VI was restored to the throne, and through him Warwick ruled for some months.

Once more, however, there was a change in fortune. Edward IV, who had escaped to Holland, returned with assistance from the continent; in 1471 he defeated his opponents at Barnet, killed Warwick, and captured Henry VI. Within a month Queen Margaret was defeated in the terrible battle of Tewkesbury, her son Edward, who had surrendered, was stabbed in cold blood, and about two weeks later Henry VI, last of the Lancastrians, died in the Tower, and with his death the Yorkists were in sole possession of the throne. The rule of King Edward was a disappointment to everybody, and England was plundered right and left by the nobles and the soldiers returning from unsuccessful wars abroad. On an almost forgotten charge of treason, Edward executed his brother Clarence, and by his tyrannous exactions of money made himself wealthy, but brought royalty into disrepute by his perversion of justice and constant tyrannical exactions. One event of his reign, however, is particularly noteworthy, for in 1476



Caxton established the first printing press in England and with it came the first gleams of the Renaissance, which culminated in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

At the death of Edward in 1483 there remained of the royal family only three who could claim the throne. There was only one natural heir, Edward, son of Edward IV; Richard, Duke of Gloucester, a brother of Edward IV, a violent and deformed noble, declared himself regent, imprisoned Edward and his younger brother Richard, and with apparent reluctance himself assumed the crown as Richard III. About a month later the two princes disappeared from the Tower, and it is supposed that they were murdered at Richard's command. Though his brief reign was marked by many creditable measures, the bloody steps by which he had obtained his power were disgusting to his people, and nothing he could do would satisfy them. Having proposed to marry his own niece, the sister of the murdered princes, he found a rival in Henry Tudor, the Earl of Richmond, and was forced to give her up. By this marriage, Henry, who was the head of the Lancastrian line, united the houses of the red and white roses in a permanent peace. Though an exile in France, he succeeded in raising an army and in landing in his native country of Wales in 1485. Richard, who had a large standing army, relied entirely upon its strength, though many of the companies which composed it were al-



*From Painting by Millais*

PRINCES IN THE TOWER



ready pledged to his enemy. The two armies met at Bosworth Field; the insignificant army of the invader soon grew to astonishing proportions by desertions from the King, and Richard himself was slain in a desperate effort to reach the Duke. Richard's crown was found upon the battle field and placed upon the head of the victor, who thus became Henry VII (1485-1509).

XI. HENRY VII. With the union of the houses of Lancaster and York by the marriage of Henry VII, the Tudor family became established on the throne, and the modern period began for England. Frequent changes in the ruling power had made it easy for the English people to transfer their allegiance, and they rather welcomed the appearance of a more just and a quieter family, even though it was more despotic. The Wars of the Roses had practically exterminated the nobles, or at least had completely humbled them and the clergy, so that, nothing standing between Henry and his people, despotism became easy. There were, however, still remnants of the Yorkist faction in existence, and its foreign supporters caused numerous disturbances and insurrections, which, however, found little favor among the majority of the English people and consequently were easily suppressed. Henry's eldest daughter was married to James IV of Scotland, and thus peace was brought into Great Britain and the beginning of a new ruling family established for England. At this

time too, Ireland was brought more closely into union with the great island, and the same laws were extended over both. To the conduct of foreign affairs Henry gave much attention, kept out of wars and arranged the marriage of Catharine, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, to his oldest son Arthur, and after Arthur's death, to his brother Henry VIII, in 1509.

Henry was avaricious and taxed his people rigorously, and through the Court of the Star Chamber increased his income enormously by fining his barons for transgressing forgotten laws or keeping companies of armed or liveried retainers. By this means he prevented the rise of a new aristocracy and increased the absolutism of his reign. He was an excellent judge of men, was his own Prime Minister, and had all that dignity which was peculiar to his family, so that, though he was miserly in all his general expenditures, he was regarded rather highly by the people, because he did not indulge in great abuses of power and possessed, for all his stubbornness, a certain tact.

XII. HENRY VIII (1491-1547). Henry was eighteen years old when he succeeded to the crown in 1509, and less than two months later he married Catharine, to whom he had been betrothed for four years, and the two were crowned together. Though she was six years his senior, their marriage was for many years happy, and Henry confined himself to amusements. He was described by the Venetian am-

bassador as the handsomest and best dressed Prince in Europe. "He is very accomplished, a good musician, composes well, is a most capital horseman, a fine jousting, speaks good French, Latin and Spanish, is very religious, hears three masses daily when he hunts, and sometimes five on other days. . . . He is very fond of hunting, and never takes his diversion without tiring eight or ten horses, which he causes to be stationed beforehand along the line of country he means to take; when one is tired he mounts another, and before he gets home they are all exhausted." Such characteristics made him a favorite with all classes of the English people, and as his ministers were chosen with great skill and he held his servants under firm control, there was every prospect for a thoroughly popular and successful administration; but he had a violent temper, and as time wore on new traits of character appeared that changed the condition of affairs in every respect.

For twenty years public government was in the hands of Wolsey, whom Henry had raised from an humble station until in 1518 he was appointed Cardinal and exercised almost supreme power over Church and State, while he rivaled the King in outward splendor. However, Henry stood back of it all, and Wolsey's position depended entirely upon the will of the monarch. Wolsey's diplomacy was sound and intelligent, consisting in using the English alliance to prevent the growth of a strong

power on the continent; and Henry VIII's rôle in continental politics followed the lines laid down by his Prime Minister. Meantime, Henry had fallen a victim to the charms of Anne Boleyn, a sprightly Irish girl, and, as his only child was a girl, he began to think that his crown was not safe without a male heir. Accordingly, he plotted for a divorce from Catharine of Aragon, claiming, however, that he did so because his conscience troubled him for marrying his deceased brother's wife, although the Pope had given him dispensation therefor. With the details of his schemes and the manner in which he arbitrarily set aside the Pope's decisions, we have little concern. It is enough to say, however, that he divorced his wife, Wolsey fell into disgrace and died, while the King openly set aside the power of the Church of Rome. During these events Henry's character seemed to have wholly changed; he became more filled with unreasoning passion and capable of taking any steps to obtain his ends. In these he was ably seconded by Thomas Cromwell, the cold-blooded minister who succeeded Wolsey. The remainder of his reign was filled with minor wars, both at home and abroad, and political disturbances which were quelled by his arbitrary acts. The execution of Bishop Fischer and Sir Thomas More and the numerous disgraceful matrimonial adventures which followed need not give us any concern, but in this connection we should remember that it was during his reign that the

Protestant Reformation firmly established itself in England. We shall have occasion to study more closely the entrance of the Reformation and the rise of the Renaissance. So arbitrary and severe were Henry's schemes for taxation and his various methods for raising money that the common people fell into lower depths of poverty, while the upper classes amassed wealth and lived in extravagance and luxury. Meanwhile, England seemed blind to what was occurring in the New World.

At his death, Henry VIII left three children: Mary, the daughter of Catharine of Aragon; Elizabeth, daughter of Anne Boleyn; and Edward, the ten-year-old son of his third wife. Both daughters had been declared illegitimate, and the Prince was made King as Edward VI. The young King was entirely unfitted to cope with the difficult conditions that faced him; during his brief reign the Protestant religion fell into disrepute, and at the time of his death Catholic worship was restored by Parliament, which, however, was unwilling to return the confiscated Church property or reinstate the dispossessed clergy. When at the age of sixteen Edward died, England had become so weary of the shameless rule that was practiced in his name that she looked forward with some approval, at least with relief and hope, to the accession of his elder sister Mary. Protestantism had been forced upon England, and the people eagerly rallied to the Catholic Mary, who reigned through five years of persecution



and arbitrary and often unjustifiable executions. One of her first victims was the beautiful Lady Jane Grey, and others equally noteworthy were sacrificed to her cruel policy. At that time religion and politics were so intermingled that what is commonly attributed to religious rancor acquired much of its force from political hatred. A marriage was arranged between Philip II of Spain and the Queen, but the only value which his English bride had in Philip's eye was the aid she might bring him in his wars against France. England's reward for her intercession was the humiliating loss of Calais, which was her last possession in France and the only token of her power on the continent. At the death of Mary there was little grief in England, for the people were tired of her cruelties and hoped for better things under her sister Elizabeth.

XIII. QUEEN ELIZABETH (1558-1603). Elizabeth, the daughter of Anne Boleyn, was the sole remaining heir of Henry VIII. Inclined toward Protestantism, she was opposed by France, Spain and Rome, but her attitude toward her own subjects was so nearly neutral that they accepted her willingly. Learned, wise and moderate in her disposition, dignified and tactful, her people overlooked willingly her vanity, deceitfulness and penuriousness, to say nothing of her love affairs. But Elizabeth loved her country, and with an unerring judgment selected ministers who aided her zealously in making her reign glorious.

When we consider the political events of Elizabeth's reign, we find that most of the noteworthy can be attributed directly to the religious controversies of the time. With a Protestant Parliament behind her, Elizabeth promptly proclaimed a truce with the Catholics, but proceeded to make herself, rather than the Pope, the head of the English, or Episcopal, Church, which now became firmly established. While it has been seen that Henry VIII caused the Act of Supremacy to be enacted, Elizabeth revived it. There was so much of opposition aroused, however, that though Elizabeth's firmness was not stained by the cruelty that had marked Mary's reign, yet she succeeded in alienating and driving away the Catholics and in making possible the rise of the new Puritan sect. Against the latter Elizabeth directed her power toward the end of her reign, but she was harder on the Catholics; and when the Puritans refused to listen to her arguments she declared their worship illegal and imprisoned many of them. To her surprise Parliament refused its sanction; she attempted to coerce it, and finally did succeed in berating it into submission, so thereafter the Puritans suffered severely, though not frequently to the death.

The Catholics regarded Elizabeth as illegitimate, and in Mary, Queen of Scots, the daughter of James V of Scotland, they found a candidate with a direct claim to the English throne. Having married Francis II of France,

she roused against her the other European powers, and on her return to Scotland, though she was regarded with affection by the Scotch, she was unable to quell the activities of the Presbyterians. When her son (later James VI of Scotland and James I of England) was born, she seemed in a position to unite the two nations; but her second husband, Lord Darnley, was murdered under circumstances that looked suspiciously against her; she soon married the Earl of Bothwell; her conspiracies and love affairs made life in Scotland impossible, and she fled to England. Elizabeth met her coldly, but permitted her to live in obscurity for nineteen years, although she was continually embroiled in plots against the English Queen. After a time Elizabeth grew fearful of the course events were taking in England, and, observing the terrible condition of things in Europe, which had just culminated in the massacre of St. Bartholomew and the no less terrible persecutions of the Duke of Alva in the Netherlands, began a series of persecutions, in the form of laws against Catholics and the execution of Jesuits. These were largely defensive, because of intrigues against her, threatening foreign intervention. She sent an army into Protestant Netherlands, and thereby irritated almost to the breaking point the antagonism of Philip II. By this time Mary had become more than an object of suspicion and was finally brought to trial on a charge of treason; she was convicted, and was beheaded

early in 1587. Before she died, she sent a message to Philip bequeathing to him her claim to the English throne and charging him to avenge her.

In the meantime, Philip had been gathering a great fleet, which he had named the *Invincible Armada*, and now set out with the deliberate purpose of subjugating and converting the English to his faith; the latter, however, rallied to the defense of the Queen, and under her daring admirals made Spain feel her power and warlike nature. Elizabeth did not wait for the Armada to attack, but gave a free commission to Sir Francis Drake, a sea-rover of unquestioned skill and bravery, and his little fleet swept into the Bay of Cadiz, where the Armada was assembling, and burned and destroyed eighty vessels and captured a large amount of treasure from India, which revealed to England the possibilities of a trade with that country.

Philip's great expedition was a complete failure. The fleet was delayed for a month in the neighborhood of the Bay of Biscay, and when it sighted the hostile coast Catholics and Protestants alike were armed and ready for the defense of their mother country. After several conflicts the Armada retreated in disorder and was driven out into the North Sea, where a terrible storm completed the wreckage begun by the English navy. In the fall of 1588 about fifty ships, bearing a third of the army which had sailed from Lisbon, found their way

back to Spain. Although England was victorious, Elizabeth's niggardliness prevented her from properly following up the victory. In the next year an expedition under Drake ravaged the Spanish coast, and private expeditions fitted out by Raleigh, Drake, Hawkins and others came over and swept the Spanish Main, as the American seas were then called. When Philip II died in 1598, England was not only the first of the Protestant nations but she was on the way to become the mistress of the seas.

The reign of Elizabeth was the Golden Age, and the wars and persecutions which we have mentioned really occupied but few years of her long rule, for the greater part of which England was wholly at peace with foreign nations and at liberty to follow the allurements offered by the New World and to acquire its wealth unrestrainedly. Vast commercial undertakings were begun with Russia, Turkey and East India, until England found herself a rival of the Dutch in foreign activities. Her maritime trade grew enormously. Great noblemen engaged in these enterprises, and internal commerce was stimulated by the results. However, the tremendous increase in wealth in England did not improve the condition of the lower classes, who found themselves suffering more and more from contrast with their luxury-loving superiors, who, if they did not live in fortified castles, yet surrounded themselves with a splendor that the old barons never

dared attempt. The city of London was dark, dirty and unpaved, and nothing had been done to make general conditions of life more tolerable. New products were rapidly coming from every direction, but it will help us to understand the condition of the people if we remember that knives and forks were just coming into use, that tea and coffee were unknown, potatoes almost unheard of and tobacco just becoming popular. Soap was scarce or unknown to the majority of the populace, and the uncleanness of homes and streets laid the country open to the plagues which ravaged it frequently. We shall learn more of Elizabeth in the literature of the period.

XIV. DIVINE RIGHT IN ENGLAND. At the death of Elizabeth, James VI of Scotland, the son of Queen Mary, became James I of England (1603–1625); with his advent the Tudor dynasty died out, while that of the Stuarts was enthroned, though two great revolutions were to intervene before it was completely established. James failed to comprehend the temperament of his English subjects and was bound to fail, for they were just falling under the influence of a stern and narrow Puritanism, which prompted them to accept no rule except God and their own Parliament and to consider all public matters, as well as private, subject only to the dictates of conscience. The conceited, learned but prejudiced James, with his ridiculous figure and flabby countenance, brought with him the theory of the divine right

of kings, a belief in which he was strengthened from year to year by flattering lawyers and ambitious Churchmen. Such a right, however, could not control a Catholic Ireland, an Episcopal England and a Presbyterian Scotland. Two plots were discovered early in his reign, one of which resulted in the unjust imprisonment of Sir Walter Raleigh. The King's conduct soon brought out a third conspiracy of even wider purpose and more nefarious character. Several noblemen planned to undermine the House of Parliament and blow it up with gunpowder, but suspicion having been aroused, a search was instigated; Guy Fawkes, a reckless fortune-hunter, was found in the mine on the fifth of November, 1605, and was tried and executed. So violent a plot met with no favor among the English, and such strict laws were passed against the Catholics that they were nearly disfranchised, and the burden of opposition to absolutism fell upon the Puritans. In addition to quarrels and conspiracies at home, the reign of James was distinguished by a curiously incapable foreign policy, so that, though great enterprises, such as the planting of the colony in Virginia, were undertaken, the King had little part in them. Although the authorized translation of the Bible was made during his reign the Puritans obtained no greater liberties, but were continually driven toward the Anglican Church.

In 1625 James was succeeded by his son Charles I, who raised forced loans and impris-

oned those who refused to grant them. Three years later Parliament passed the celebrated Petition of Right, which prohibited all forms of taxation excepting those authorized by Parliament and made other restrictions on the kingly power, to which Charles consented only with great unwillingness. Then for eleven years he ruled without a Parliament, raising his taxes by illegal methods, while his ministers, by their high-handed acts, brought against him the ill will of all denominations. By 1640 his subjects were in such a rebellious state of mind that he was compelled to call the civil forces to his aid, and the so-called Long Parliament came into existence. Led by Pym and Hampden, the new law-makers attainted Charles' chief minister, Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, and he was executed. They abolished the Star Chamber and Ecclesiastical Commission, which had been instruments of serious oppression, impeached the bishops, and addressed Charles in the protest which is known as the Grand Remonstrance. It seemed the beginning of the end of divine right in England.

XV. CIVIL WAR. The King suddenly ordered the arrest of Hampden, Pym and three other leaders of the House, accusing them of earlier offenses, and when officers refused to make the arrest, Charles himself appeared in Parliament with five hundred men to seize those charged with treason. Though the entry occasioned only verbal hostilities, Charles was



badly frightened at the attitude of the members, and withdrew from London. The Commons now made extravagant demands, and, aware that Charles could not accept such terms, began to gather an army. Charles raised his standard at Nottingham. Neither side was ready to fight, and men took part in the contest reluctantly, for in many instances friends were arraigned against friends and brothers against brothers. In the main, the middle class, consisting of farmers and tradesmen of the south and east of England, composed the army of the Commons, while the royalist forces, cavaliers, as they were called, drew their chief support from the gentry from the north and west of England and from Wales, Scotland and Ireland. The Catholics, who saw no hope for themselves in the victory of either side, bravely took up the King's cause. A battle fought at Edgehill in 1642 resulted in a draw, but when the King advanced on London, he was repulsed or checked in many lesser engagements. Hampden was killed, John Pym died, and the London populace, in fear for lives and property, clamored for peace.

The Commons, however, now dominated by Presbyterianism, called upon the Scotch, and a Solemn League and Covenant was finally entered into, under the conditions of which Scottish forces marched to the aid of their English brethren. This, which occurred in the year 1643, marked a turn in the tide of affairs, which was strengthened by the appearance of

the one soldier who seemed competent to lead the cause of the Commons and to restore liberty and a measure of toleration to England. He was Oliver Cromwell, a country gentleman, who through his early life had passed among his friends unnoted, though in Parliament he had made a decided impression by his blunt and forcible speech. Originally he seemed to desire only the peace and welfare of his country, and, becoming convinced that his foot-soldiers could not properly defend themselves against the cavaliers, he began the organization of a cavalry regiment, which, to use his own words, "made some conscience of what it did." Little by little he collected a body of troops who prayed and preached and fought while singing hymns, with a rigid discipline and so unquenchable a valor that the *Ironsides*, as the troop was known, came to be regarded as a most powerful body, which never suffered defeat.

In the meantime, Charles had assembled the royalist members of Parliament, invited the Catholics to his aid, and tried to keep up the rôle of king. The Roundheads, as the Commoners were known, became as intolerant as any king, began the persecution of Anglican divines, destroyed works of art in the churches, proscribed the prayer-book and placed the executive power of England and Scotland in a committee of twenty-five members. Finally Cromwell's Ironsides were completely victorious in the battle of Marston Moor, and after

a realignment of forces the "New Model" army was formed under the command of Sir Thomas Fairfax, with Cromwell as lieutenant. In 1645 the King undertook to treat with his foes, but with fatal indecision postponed his agreement, and after the battle at Naseby, in which the New Model army was wholly successful, saw his power wholly extinguished. Fresh reverses followed, and Charles finally fled in disguise and surrendered himself to the Scotch army, in May, 1646; but the Scots, having received their pay, turned homeward and surrendered their royal prisoner to England.

XVI. THE COMMONWEALTH. In Parliament the Presbyterians were in the majority, but in the army the independents controlled; disagreements became grave, and the army frightened Parliament into paying the soldiers and declaring a general amnesty for the insubordination which had been so common. When a mob threatened to disrupt Parliament, the army marched to London, quieted the crowd and began to work with Parliament for a satisfactory compromise. Meanwhile, the King had escaped to the Isle of Wight, but was detained there, practically a prisoner, and his continued meddling finally determined the Commons and the army to treat with him no more. Thus far civil war had brought neither freedom nor peace to England, and discontent was everywhere rampant. Cromwell returned from Wales, met and defeated a Scotch Presbyterian army which had invaded England, and en-



OLIVER CROMWELL

1599-1658



tered Edinburgh. On the thirtieth of November Charles was imprisoned by the army; it now took control of everything, blacklisted certain members of Parliament, and placed the affairs of the kingdom in the hands of the remainder. In January, 1649, the King was brought to Windsor Castle, and after the House of Lords had refused its assent the Commons declared their power to act alone; they appointed a high court of justice, tried Charles for treason, and on the eighth of February condemned him to death. The next day he was beheaded in front of the Palace of Whitehall.

The same Parliament made it treason to recognize the son of the dead Stuart or any other as King of England. The House of Lords was abolished, and England became a Republic, under the guidance of a Council of State and a House of Commons, though the army continued its bold and independent attitude. In any event, the divine right of kings had been challenged, and England had fought her battle of democracy and conscience.

At first the Commonwealth appeared to have such great strength that many royalists pretended to join with it, although many others fled to foreign lands. Some were captured, arraigned for treason and beheaded in the palace yard. In Scotland and Ireland conditions were but little better, though the opponents of the Commonwealth were inclined to be more rebellious. The Irish were surprised by Cromwell, however, and in a campaign lasting less

than a year their rebellion was crushed with horrible massacre. In Scotland Montrose attempted an uprising in favor of Charles, but, though he obtained some arms and men from Northern Europe, his expedition was defeated, and he himself met with death on the scaffold. Charles II, however, continued his negotiations with the Scots, took the Covenant, bound himself not to tolerate Roman Catholicism, and agreed to follow the advice of Parliament and the Church in the government of Scotland. In 1650 he landed in Scotland, and the army greeted him with enthusiasm, though he was looked upon with suspicion by committees of Church and Parliament, and, in fact, was more a prisoner than a sovereign. Cromwell, having heard of the arrival of the King, tried to induce Parliament to abandon him, but, having failed in so doing, the Republic decided on war, and Cromwell was made commander in chief. At Dunbar in 1650 he defeated the Scotch forces, who, however, rallied around Charles as their King and determined to set up a separate government. Though Charles with his new subjects invaded England, they were disastrously defeated by Cromwell and almost completely subjugated by General Monk, whom Cromwell left to complete the work.

The dealings of the Commonwealth with foreign nations were almost uniformly successful. Maritime enterprises were revived; the navy was increased in power, and with its aid Portugal was brought into harmony with

the English; Spain came into the alliance, and after a series of naval battles, not always successful, England practically destroyed the celebrated Dutch navy of Van Tromp and opened the way to the control of trade with the East.

In the meantime, Cromwell's ambitions, which had at first been held in check by him, were thoroughly aroused, and he set out on that part of his career which ended by his gaining kingly power under the title of Lord Protector of the Commonwealth. By actual force he dissolved the Long Parliament, dissolved the Council of State, and called together the Little Parliament, or, as it is frequently known from the name of one of its members, the Barebones Parliament, composed of carefully selected men who were supposed to represent England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Unsettled by their rise to distinction, these Parliamentarians irritated everybody, and finally, in 1653, were driven from office by a company of soldiers acting under the direction of Cromwell. A few days later, in December, 1653, Cromwell was solemnly installed Lord Protector and a new Parliament, to meet every third year, was elected; but it was no more successful in satisfying the desires of Cromwell, or in giving a good government, than its predecessors, and the Parliament was dissolved in 1655. Its successor lasted but three years, when Cromwell again in anger dissolved the body and began a system of arbitrary military rule which



was not only thoroughly respected abroad, but also level-headed enough to make the country prosperous. During this time Cromwell negotiated triumphant foreign treaties, took Jamaica from Spain, and in return for services rendered was given Dunkirk by the French. Soon after, however, Cromwell was seized by a fatal illness, and in 1658, on the anniversary of his victories at Worcester and Dunbar, he passed away.

It is generally conceded that Oliver Cromwell was the greatest man of his time. The royalist Lord Clarendon says:

He was one of those men whom his very enemies could not condemn without commending at the same time; for he could never have done half that mischief without great parts of courage, industry and judgment. . . . To reduce three nations which perfectly hated him to an entire obedience to all his dictates; to awe and govern those nations by an army that was indevoted to him and wished his ruin, was an instance of a very prodigious address. But his greatness at home was but a shadow of the glory he had abroad.

The Catholic historian, Lingard, observes:

His secret workings to acquire the sovereignty for himself and his family were represented [by him] as endeavors to secure for his former brethren in arms the blessings of civil and religious freedom, the two great objects which originally called them into the field. Thus his whole conduct was made up of artifice and deceit. . . . Some writers have maintained that Cromwell dissembled in religion as well as in politics. . . . But this supposition is contradicted by the uniform tenor of his life.

Cromwell had made a will providing for the emergency caused by his death, but the document was never found, and the council proclaimed his son Richard as Protector. For five months he ruled with apparent success, but no sooner had the influence of his great father begun to wane than discontent and jealousies arose, which became so strong that at the end of eight months he was quite willing to resign. After a year of confusion the old Parliament was called into being, but, having quarreled with the army, it was forcibly driven out, and the Scottish soldiers, under their commander Monk, realizing that Cromwell was gone, lost their sympathy with the Commonwealth, and after marching to London with seven thousand men, declared for a convention, which met at Westminster Hall in 1660. On the eighth of May that organization proclaimed Charles II King of England, Scotland and Ireland.

XVII. THE RESTORATION. The arrival of Charles II brought with it an intense reaction against the austere morality of Puritan times, and the court lived a profligate and corrupt life. The advisors of Charles were no better than himself, and, besides trafficking with Louis XIV of France, they instigated ruinous wars with Holland and prepared such tyrannous local rules that the people were again aroused. Plots, conspiracies and rebellions of all kinds flourished; Charles, in fear of his life, regained some of his energy and ability, and for a period ruled as an absolute despot with-

out Parliament. However, in February, 1685, he was stricken with apoplexy, and four days later he died. In his *History of England*, White says:

The witty epigram of his courtier may be quoted in serious faith as his epitaph:

“Here lies our sovereign lord, the King,  
Whose word no man relies on;  
Who never said a foolish thing,  
And never did a wise one.”

When Charles read this epigram, he retorted: “ ’Tis true! Because, while my words are my own, my acts are my ministers’.”

In spite of bad government and the unsettled condition of affairs in England, the country continued to grow in wealth and power and to expand its world commerce and its plans for colonization. By the end of the reign the chain of English colonies on the Atlantic coast of America was practically complete. In 1663 Charles had given a company of his courtiers a large tract of territory south of Virginia, which was named Carolina. The Dutch colony, New Amsterdam, had been acquired by conquest, and in 1681 a great tract of land bordering on the province of Maryland was granted to William Penn in payment of the debt owed his father. Owing to a desire that these colonies should feel themselves entirely dependent upon the mother country, the Navigation Acts of 1663 and 1672 were made to apply to them as rigidly as to foreign rivals.

XVIII. THE REVOLUTION. Prior to the death of Charles, James II had been busy with the affairs of Scotland, but he had returned to England and was with the King at his death. At his accession to the throne he promised to preserve the government as it then existed and was received with enthusiasm by his subjects, who had no reason to doubt his word. But almost immediately he revealed the two great objects of his life—to rule independent of Parliament and to restore the Roman Catholic religion to England. The unsuccessful rebellion by the Duke of Monmouth and the bloody revenge taken by James not only upon the leaders but also upon those who had contributed to Monmouth's plot, destroyed the good will of their sympathizers, while it only served to whet the passion of the King for tyrannical rule. By his Declaration of Indulgence, in which he restored the rights of the Roman Catholics and Protestant dissenters, he antagonized the remainder of his followers, and rebellion was rife. Whatever he might do now, the King could not restore the confidence of the people, and the birth of a son gave the signal for the entrance to England of his daughter Mary and her husband William, the Prince of Orange, who were looked upon as able to protect the liberties of the English people. In November, 1688, William landed in Torbay with about fourteen thousand men, and King James, seeing his courtiers as well as soldiers deserting him, fled to France, where he was

hospitably received by his cousin, Louis XIV. Until February there was an interregnum, during which time William conducted himself with cautious neutrality toward all the opposing forces of England and endeared himself to all parties, so that finally Parliament proclaimed William and Mary as joint sovereigns, but gave to the husband the sole administration of affairs.

The famous Bill of Rights, passed early in William's reign and willingly agreed to by him, put an end to absolutism, provided that no Roman Catholic should assume the crown and established the supremacy of Parliament. Since that time England has been governed by what is known as the Cabinet system, in which the king's ministers are answerable directly to Parliament and are changed whenever the political complexion of the House of Commons changes. However, the Cabinet system as it is known to-day did not originate with this reign; William had to rely on Parliamentary consent, and so gradually the monarch came to choose a *party* Cabinet of the complexion of the majority in Parliament. William's reign was by no means free from internal dissensions, but he succeeded in quieting all uprisings and establishing law and order throughout his kingdom. In foreign affairs his ambition had been to check the power of Louis XIV, and England was embroiled in two destructive wars, for the second of which William had just prepared when his life was terminated by accident.



QUEEN ANNE  
REIGNED 1702-1714



William was succeeded by Anne (1702–1714), a second daughter of James II of England. During her reign party feeling ran high, especially over the questions which were raised by Anne's determination that her successor should be her brother James. All her schemes seemed destined to failure, and at her death she was succeeded by the Elector of Hanover, George I. During her reign the Parliaments of England and Scotland were united, the War of the Spanish Succession was successfully carried out with brilliant victories on the continent, and the strong fortress of Gibraltar was permanently annexed to the Empire. In literature, hers was one of the most brilliant reigns in English history, and we shall have further occasion to study it.

XIX. THE HANOVERIANS. George I (1714–1727), the Elector of Hanover, was, through his mother, the great grandson of James I of England. During the War of the Spanish Succession he had won distinction for his bravery, and when he came to the English throne he was received with satisfaction by the most of his subjects. The complete union of Scotland and England had been formed in 1707; from that time on they were united under the name of Great Britain, and the history of the two countries becomes one. In Scotland the union was not altogether popular, and soon after the accession of King George there were insurrections in the interests of the exiled Stuarts, but the new Parliament acted vigorously and put



them down unsparingly. George was really very little of an Englishman, and his chief interests lay in his continental possessions; he was quite willing to allow Parliament to govern Great Britain as it saw fit, and in the hands of able ministers England rapidly gained in commercial power, though toward the close of the reign the failure of the South Sea Company greatly embarrassed the British government and brought suffering to thousands of investors.

George II (1727-1760) succeeded his father and showed no greater love for his British subjects than had his father. During his reign occurred the Seven Years' War, which was made memorable by the conquest of Canada and the exploits in India of Lord Clive, which still further increased the extent of the British Empire. In 1760 George II died, and was succeeded by his grandson, George III. As the young Prince had been given an English education he was more popular from the very outset, and his long reign of sixty years was filled with important events, which concerned not only Europe, but our own country in America. It was during his reign, in fact, that colonial affairs in America came to a crisis, and after the Revolutionary War England lost that portion of her territory in America which is now included within the boundaries of the United States. In 1793 George was at war with France simply because of his opposition to the fanatic republicanism of the French Revolution. By

the victory of Trafalgar, Nelson established English supremacy on the sea, and Wellington, by his victories in Spain and Portugal, enabled England to obtain favorable terms in the treaty of Vienna. In 1810 the King, who had shown evidences of insanity several times, finally broke down, and for the remainder of his life Great Britain was governed by his son as regent. In 1820 George IV came to the throne. The most important event of the ten years of his reign was the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act. As he left no descendants, he was succeeded by his brother William IV, who came to the throne in 1830. He had been educated for the navy and had become Lord High Admiral, though he had never shown any great ability. Unfit for ruling by temperament, William was compelled to rely upon his ministers, who kept him from doing any harm and really gave an enlightened rule to the kingdom. It was during his reign that Great Britain abolished slavery in all her colonies and paid an enormous sum of money to the owners of the slaves.

On the death of William IV, Victoria, a granddaughter of George III, became Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. In 1877 she took the title of Empress of India, a new creation. At the time of her accession to the throne she was in her eighteenth year and was practically unknown to her subjects, as she had been brought up in seclusion with remarkable prudence and care

by her mother. In 1840 she was married to Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, and the marriage proved exceptionally happy. Her long and almost unexampled reign of sixty-three years was one of continued prosperity, peace and contentment at home and amicable relations with foreign powers. In 1887 the people celebrated the golden jubilee, or fiftieth year, of her reign, and ten years later, with still more imposing ceremonies, they celebrated, with representatives of all the colonies, her diamond anniversary. When she died in 1901 her loss was felt over the entire civilized world. There are few, if any, names in the world's history that carry with them more of respect, admiration and affection than that of Queen Victoria.

She was succeeded by her son, Edward VII, and he in 1910 by his second son, George V. Both kings tried to carry out British ideals of government and succeeded in a creditable manner, although during the reign of the latter the World War swept England into the fearful catastrophe which engulfed most of the nations of Europe, as well as Japan, China and the United States.





## CHAPTER II

### ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD

**T**HE LANGUAGE. Of this period in the development of English one writer has said:

A person clings to his mother tongue with great tenacity and a race gives up its language with reluctance; yet the influence of time and environment makes changes and development certain. So by considering what races have made up the English and by remembering the predominating traits of each race, it is not impossible to say what has been the history of the language. The Celts made their contribution, but it was absorbed by the already virile Anglo-Saxon. The Normans brought French and a host of words of Latin derivation which served to add a wider range and a greater elegance to the vocabulary. But to this day the words that give directness and vigor to our language, that speak of home and kindred and that are most common in our speech are of Anglo-Saxon origin.

At first, different dialects prevailed in different sections of England; the ratio of French words was much greater in and about London,

where the Norman court so long held sway, than it was to the north and south. By the middle of the fourteenth century, however, English was the prescribed language of the realm, and everywhere the cultured people even were abandoning the Norman French. There was no standard that fixed the use of words, and few were competent to lay down rules of usage which might become universal. However, as time went on, the number of cultured people increased, the language took more definite form, and among the cultivated classes a uniform dialect came into use, a dialect which, revised and refined by later writers, gave to the world the present English language, spoken by many millions in all parts of the world. It is a strong language, precise in its meanings and copious in its vocabulary, and one well calculated to serve as a medium for the great masterpieces of thought.

As Anglo-Saxon is the basic tongue upon which the English language is built, so upon Anglo-Saxon literature is our later literature erected. The grammar of the English language is merely a simplification of the grammar of the Anglo-Saxon, and the great mass of our words are of the same origin. If we consider the sources from which the English vocabulary has been derived, we find that our prepositions, most of our common nouns and irregular verbs are from the Anglo-Saxon; from the same source are most of the words that are of specific significance. For instance,

when we speak of color or motion, we use a foreign word, but when we speak of specific colors, such as red and white, or of specific motions, such as walk and run, we use Saxon terms. And finally, most of the words which express our feelings or emotions, the words of every-day life in the home, the shop, the market or on the farm, are Teutonic in their origin. In fact, it is these elements which enable us to speak and write most clearly and with greatest animation and to express feeling and describe every-day incidents most vividly.

From the first incursion of the Latin races our language obtained little that was permanent. The greater part of the Latinisms which we use are of later origin, many having entered in the thirteenth century, when there was a revival of the classics, and still more during the Elizabethan Age, in which Renaissance learning was widely popularized. Even in the latter part of the eighteenth century Jonson and those of his school who regulated the form and style of literature brought in those pompous phrases and many-syllabled words which have, perhaps, done quite as much harm as good to the language. Many French words came with the Conquest; still more came a century later when the few native Englishmen who loved literature began the study of French poetry; and again in the fourteenth century a third irruption of French words occurred when Chaucer and poets of his kind went to French sources for their inspiration. There are about

four hundred thousand words in the modern unabridged English dictionary in its completest form, and of these perhaps nearly half are of Teutonic origin.

II. CELTIC LITERATURE. Prior to the Norman Conquest the Gaelic, or Celtic, tongue was common only in Ireland and Scotland, where it still survives. There are bardic songs and historic legends still in existence which may be referred to a date older than the ninth century, and there are valuable prose chronicles believed to contain the substance of much older chronicles which give us the history of the country in the language of the fifth century. These are the oldest of which any European country can boast.

All the relics of the Scotch Celts are metrical. In 1762 McPherson, a Scotch poet, published certain lyrics which he represented as having been translated from ancient Gaelic poetry of Ossian, which dated back to the third century. Much dispute concerning the authorship of these poems has followed, and still the question of their authenticity remains unsettled. Some specimens of the poetry of the ancient Cymrians, or Britons, have been preserved by the Welsh, and from the fragments of their literature have been built those elegant legends which have made immortal the names of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. Some of the Welsh stories are very similar to the Norse sagas and must have sprung from traditions of a rude and early people.

III. EARLY LATIN. The Britons, as we have seen, were early converted to Christianity; the priests and monks who brought the new religion remained to write in their native tongue, so most of the earlier productions were of an ecclesiastical nature. Of the native writers the majority were of Irish descent, for when the Roman Empire broke up Ireland served as a refuge for fugitives from England and the continent, and for some centuries Ireland contained more men of learning than all the rest of Europe. During this early period the highest place in the literature of the British Isles was taken by the writings of the Venerable Bede, who died in 735, and, though most of his writings were in Latin, he produced some in the Saxon tongue that place him among the earliest of our writers.

IV. ANGLO-SAXON LITERATURE. Among the early Anglo-Saxon literary monuments are three historical poems, which are not English, but are filled with recollections of the continent and must have been composed long before the emigration to England. Of these, the most important is *Beowulf*, which is essentially a Norse saga. After the introduction of Christianity, many hymns, lives of the saints in verse and numerous religious and reflective poems appeared, the most remarkable of which are attributed to Caedmon, who died in 680. Translations were made at an early date from the Latin, particularly of parts of the Scriptures. The most important monument of



Saxon prose literature is the series of historical records which have been grouped under the name *Saxon Chronicle* and compiled from records kept in the monasteries probably from the time of Alfred down to the year 1154. But we can afford to pursue a more detailed study of some of these early writings.

V. "BEOWULF." Important as this narrative of adventures is, it can scarcely be said to approximate a national epic, because its leading characters are principally Danish, and the events occur in the native territory of the Anglo-Saxons before they came to England. The author of the poem is wholly unknown, and, we can only speculate as to its date, which probably was before 750, but the poem itself is a faithful representation of the period, some five or six hundred years before the introduction of Christianity into England. The only known manuscript is of the tenth century, and that was discovered in 1705 in the Cottonian Library; but it was entirely neglected until 1786, when the Danish scholar, Thorkelin, made a transcript, which he published in 1815.

The epic, which is about three thousand lines long, narrates the adventures of Beowulf in his expedition to slay Grendel, a huge monster that had for years devoured the Danish knights and devastated their kingdom. The action is extremely simple. Beowulf's first adventure strongly resembles the classical tale in which King Phineus is delivered from the Harpies, and the chief incident is Beowulf's battle with

Grendel, which is narrated as follows, in *Journeys Through Bookland*:

When the history of the Danes begins they had no kings and suffered much at the hands of their neighbors. Then by way of the sea, from some unknown land, came Scef, who subdued the neighboring tribes and established the Danish throne on a firm foundation. His son and his son's son followed him, but the latter sailed away as his grandfather had come, and the race of ruler gods was ended.

Left to themselves, the Danes chose a King who ruled long and well and left his son Hrothgar to make of them a wealthy and prosperous people.

After years of warfare, when the prosperity of Hrothgar was fully established, it came into his mind to build a great hall where he and his warriors and counselors could meet around one common banquet table and where, as they drank their mead, they could discuss means for increasing their power and making better the condition of their peoples. High-arched and beautiful was the great mead-palace, with towering pinnacles and marvelous walls, and the name that he gave to the palace was Heorot, the heart, the center of the realm. When the noble building was finished, Hrothgar's heart was filled with joy, and he gave to his counselors a noble feast, at which he presented them with rings and ornaments and entertained them with music on the harps and the inspiring songs of the Skalds.

Far away in the marshes, in the dark and solemn land where dwelt the Jotuns, the giants who warred against God's people, lived the grim and ferocious Grendel, more terrible than any of his brethren. From out of the fastnesses of his gloomy home he saw the fair building of Hrothgar and grew jealous of the Danish King, hating the united people, for peace and harmony were evil in his sight.

The feast was long over, and the thanes and warriors slept in the banquet hall, worn out by their rejoicings,

but dreaming only of the peaceful days to follow their long years of warfare. Into the midst of the hall crept Grendel, and seized in his mighty arms full thirty of the sleeping men and carried them away to his noisome home, where he feasted at leisure upon their bodies.

The next morning there was grief and terror among the remaining Danes, for they knew that no human being could have wrought such havoc and that no human power could prevail against the monster who preyed upon them.

The next night Grendel came again and levied his second tribute, and again there was mourning and desolation in the land. Thus for twelve years the monster giant came at intervals and carried away many of the noblest in the kingdom. Then were there empty homes everywhere in the land, and sorrow and suffering came where joy and peace had rested. Strange as it may seem, Hrothgar himself was never touched, though he sat the night long watching his nobles as they slept in the mead-hall, hoping himself to deliver them from the awful power that harassed them. But night after night Grendel came, and while Hrothgar remained unharmed he was equally powerless to stay the ravages of the giant. When Hrothgar thought of his noble vassals carried helpless into the misty marshes to serve as food for the giant, he bowed his head in sorrow and prayed to his gods to send help before all these perished.

Far to the westward, among strange people, lived a man, the strongest and greatest of his race, Beowulf by name. To him came the news of Grendel's deeds and of Hrothgar's sorrow, and his soul was filled with a fiery ambition to free the Danes. From among his warriors he selected fifteen of the boldest and strongest, and put out to sea in a new ship, pitched within and without, to seek the land of the Danes and to offer his help to Hrothgar. Over the white sea waves dashed the noble vessel, flinging the foam aside from her swanlike prow until before her showed the cliffs and wind-swept moun-

tain sides of Denmark. Giving thanks to God for their prosperous voyage, they landed, donned their heavy armor and marched in silence to the palace Heorot.

Entering the hall with clanking armor they set their brazen shields against the wall, piled their steel-headed spears in a heap by the door, and bowed to Hrothgar, who, bowed with sorrow and years, sat silently among his earls. When Beowulf rose among his warriors he towered high above them, godlike in his glittering armor. Hrothgar looked on him in wonder, but felt that he saw in the mighty man a deliverer sent in answer to his prayer.

Before Hrothgar could recover from his surprise and delight, Beowulf stretched forth his powerful arms and spoke: “Hail, Hrothgar, King of the Danes. Many a time and oft have I fought with the Jotuns, evil and powerful, and every time have I overcome, and now have I come unto the land of the Danes to undertake battle with the fierce Grendel. No human weapon hath power against a Jotun, so here in your mead-hall leave I my weapons all, and empty-handed and alone will I pit my strength against the horrid Grendel. Man to man, strength to strength, will I fight, till victory is mine or death befalleth me.

“If I perish, give my companions my shroud and send it home by them in my new ship across the sea. Let there be no mourning for me, for to every man Fate cometh at last.”

Hrothgar answered, “Noble you are, O Beowulf, and powerful, but terrible indeed is Grendel. Many a time at eventide have my warriors fearlessly vowed to await the coming of Grendel and to fight with him as you propose; but when morning came, the floor of Heorot was deep with their blood, but no other trace of them remained. Before, however, we accept your valiant offer, sit this night at meat, where, by our old and honored custom, we incite each other to heroic deeds and valorous behavior, when night shall come and Grendel claim his prey.”

A royal feast it was that the old King gave that night, and the golden mead flowed from the twisted cups in living streams, while the Skalds sang the valorous deeds of heroic Danes of old.

Then rose Beowulf to speak. "To-night Grendel cometh again, expecting no one to fight him, for many a time hath he levied his toll and escaped without harm. Here alone with myself will I keep vigil, and alone will I fight the foul fiend. To-morrow morning the sun will glorify my victory or I shall be a corpse in the dark and noisome home of the ogre."

The eye of the gray-haired King grew bright again as he listened to the brave words of Beowulf, and from her throne the Queen in her bejeweled garments stepped down to Beowulf and presented him the loving-cup with words of gracious encouragement.

"No more shall Grendel feast upon the bodies of royal Danes, for to-night his foul body shall feel the powerful grip of my mighty hands," said Beowulf.

To their proper resting places in the hall stepped the Danish warriors, one by one, filing in a steady line past the great Beowulf, to whom each gave kindly greeting. Last of all came Hrothgar, and as he passed, he grasped the strong fingers of Beowulf and said, "To your keeping I leave my great hall, Heorot. Never before have I passed the duty on to any man. Be thou brave and valiant, and if victory cometh to thee no reward shall be too great for thy service."

And so the King departed, and silence fell over Heorot.

Left alone, Beowulf laid aside his iron mail, took off his brazen helmet and ungirded his trusty sword. Then unarmed and unprotected he lay down upon his bed. All about the palace slept, but Beowulf could find no rest upon his couch.

In the dim light of the early morn, forth from the pale mists of the marshes, stalked Grendel, up to the door of the many-windowed Heorot. Fire-strengthened were the iron bands with which the doors were bound, but he tore them away like wisps of straw and walked

across the sounding tiles of the many-colored floor. Like strokes of vivid lightning flashed the fire from his eyes, making before him all things as clear as noonday. Beowulf, on his sleepless couch, held his breath as the fierce ogre gloated savagely over the bountiful feast he saw spread before him in the bodies of the sleeping Danes. With moistening lips he trod among the silent braves, and Beowulf saw him choose the strongest and noblest of them all. Quickly the monster stooped, seized the sleeping Earl, and with one fierce stroke of his massive jaw, tore open the throat of the warrior and drank his steaming blood. Then with fierce chuckles of delight he tore the corpse limb from limb and with horrid glee crunched the bones of his victim's hands.

Then spying the sleeping Beowulf he dropped his mangled prey and laid his rough hands on his watchful enemy. Suddenly Beowulf raised himself upon one elbow and fastened his strong grip on the astonished Jotun. Never before had Grendel felt such a grip of steel. He straightened his mighty back and flung the clinging Beowulf toward the door, but never for a moment did the brave champion relax his fierce grip, and the ogre was thrown back into the center of the hall. Together they fell upon the beautiful pavement and rolled about in their mighty struggles till the walls of the palace shook as in a hurricane and the very pinnacles toppled from their secure foundations. The walls of Heorot fell not, but the floor was strewn with broken benches whose gold trappings were torn like paper, while the two struggled on the floor in the wreck of drinking horns and costly vessels from the tables, while over all slopped ale from the mammoth tankards. Backward and forward they struggled, sometimes upon their feet and again upon the floor; but with all his fearsome struggles, Grendel could not break that grip of steel. At last, with one mighty wrench, Grendel tore himself free, leaving in the tightly locked hands of Beowulf his strong right arm and even his shoulder blade, torn raggedly from his body. Roaring with pain from the gaping

wound which extended from neck to waist, the ogre fled to the marshes, into whose slimy depths he fell; and there he slowly bled to death.

Fair shone the sun on Heorot the next morning when the warriors came from all directions to celebrate the marvelous prowess of Beowulf, who stalked in triumph through the hall with his bloody trophy held on high. Close by the throne of the King he hung Grendel's shoulder, arm, and hand, where all might see and test the strength of its mighty muscles and the steel-like hardness of its nails, which no human sword of choicest steel could mark or mar. With bursting heart, Hrothgar thanked God for his deliverance and gave credit to Beowulf for his valorous deed. First was the wreck of the savage encounter cleared away, then were the iron bands refastened on the door and the tables spread for a costly feast of general rejoicing. There amid the songs of the Skalds and the shouts of the warriors, the Queen poured forth the sacred mead and handed it to Beowulf in the royal cup of massive gold. As the rejoicing grew more general, the King showered gifts upon Beowulf, an ensign and a helm, a breastplate and a sword, each covered with twisted gold and set with precious stones. Eight splendid horses, trapped in costly housings trimmed with golden thread and set with jewels, were led before Beowulf, and their silken bridles were laid within his hand. With her own hand the Queen gave him a massive ring of russet gold all brilliant with carven stones and sparkling with diamonds, the finest in the land.

"May happiness and good fortune attend thee, Beowulf," she said, "and ever may these well-earned gifts remind thee of those whom thou hast succored from deadly peril; and as the years advance may fame roll in upon thee as roll the billows upon the rocky shores of our beloved kingdom."

When the feast was over Hrothgar and his Queen departed from the hall, and Beowulf retired to the house they had prepared for him. But the warriors re-

mained as was their custom, and, girt in their coats of chained mail, with swords ready at hand, they lay down upon the floor to sleep, prepared to answer on the instant any call their lord should make. Dense darkness closed upon the hall, and the Danes slept peacefully, unaware that danger threatened.

When midnight came, out of the cold waters of the reedy fastnesses in the marsh came Grendel's mother, fierce and terrible in her wrath, burning to avenge the death of her son. Like Grendel she wrenched the door from its iron fastenings and trod across the figured floor of Heorot. With bitter malice she seized the favorite counselor of Hrothgar and rent his body limb from limb. Then seizing from the wall the arm and shoulder of her son she ran quickly from the hall and hid herself in her noisome lair.

The noise of her savage work aroused the sleeping Danes, and so loud were their cries of anger and dismay that Hrothgar heard, and rushed forth to Heorot, where Beowulf met him.

As soon as Hrothgar heard what had happened he turned to Beowulf and cried, “O, mighty champion of the Danes, yet again has grief and sorrow come upon me, for my favorite war companion and chief counselor has been foully murdered by Grendel's mother, nor can we tell who next will suffer from the foul fiend's wrath.

“Scarcely a mile from this place, in the depths of a grove of moss-covered trees, which are hoary with age, and whose interlacing branches shut out the light of the sun, lies a stagnant pool. Around the edges of its foul black water twine the snake-like roots of the trees, and on its loathsome surface at night the magic fires burn dimly. In the midst of the pond, shunned alike by man and beast, lives the wolf-like mother of Grendel. Darest thou to enter its stagnant depths to do battle with the monster and to deliver us from her ravages?”

Straightening his massive form and throwing back his head in fierce determination, Beowulf replied, “To avenge a friend is better than to mourn for him. No man



can hasten or delay by a single moment his death hour. What fate awaiteth me I know not, but I dare anything to wreak vengeance on the foul murderer, and in my efforts to bring justice I take no thought of the future."

Then King Hrothgar ordered a noble steed with arching neck and tossing mane to be saddled and brought forth for the noble Beowulf to ride. Shield bearers by the score accompanied him as he rode on the narrow bridle path, between those dark-frowning cliffs whose rugged trees dimmed the sun and made the journey seem as though it were in twilight. In such a manner came they to the desolate lake in the gloomy wood.

The sight that met the eyes of Beowulf was enough to chill the blood of any man. On the shore among the tangled roots of the trees crawled hideous poisonous snakes, while on the surface of the water rolled great sea dragons, whose ugly crests were raised in anger and alarm. From the turbid depths of the water, unholy animals of strange and fearful shapes kept coming to the surface and swimming about with threatening mien.

Undaunted by these sickening sights, Beowulf blew a mighty blast upon his terrible war-horn, at the sound of which the noisome animals slunk back to the slimy depths of the dismal pond. Clad in his shirt of iron mail, wearing the hooded helmet that had often protected his head from the savage blows of his enemies, and clasping in his hand the handle of his great knife, Hrunting, whose hardened blade had carried death to many a strong foeman, Beowulf fronted the awful lake.

Thus armed and protected, he plunged into the thickened oily waters, which closed quickly over him, leaving but a few great bubbles to show where he had disappeared. Into the depths of the dark abyss he swam until it seemed as though he were plunging straight into the jaws of death.

As his mighty strength neared exhaustion, Beowulf found the hall at the depth of the abyss, and there saw Grendel's mother lying in wait for him. With her fierce claws she grappled him and dragged him into her dismal

water palace whose dark walls oozed with the slime of ages. Recovering his breath, and fierce at the assault, Beowulf swung his heavy knife and brought it down on the sea wolf's head. Never before had Hrunting failed him, but now the hard skull of Grendel's mother turned the biting edge of the forged steel, and the blow twisted the blade as though it were soft wire. Flinging aside his useless knife, Beowulf clutched the sea woman with the mighty grip that had slain her son, and the struggle for mastery began. More than once was Beowulf pushed nigh to exhaustion, but every time he recovered himself and escaped from the deadly grasp of the powerful fiend who strove to take his life. As he grew weaker, Grendel's mother seized her russet-bladed knife and with a mighty blow drove it straight at the heart of Beowulf. Once again his trusty shirt of mail turned the blade, and by a last convulsive effort he regained his feet.

As he rose from his dangerous position he saw glittering in his sight as it hung in the walls of water, the hilt of a mighty sword, which was made for giants, and which no man on earth but Beowulf could wield. Little he knew of its magic power, but he seized it in both hands, and swinging it about his head in mighty curves, struck full at the head of the monster. Savage was the blow, more mighty than human being ever struck before, and the keen edge of the sword crashed through the brazen mail, cleft the neck of the sea wolf, and felled her dead upon the floor. From her neck spurted hot blood which melted the blade and burned it away as frost wreaths are melted by the sun. In his hand remained only the carven hilt.

On the shore of the dark lake the Danes waited anxiously for the reappearance of Beowulf, and when blood came welling up through the dark waters they felt their champion had met his fate, and returning to Heorot, they sat down to mourn in the great mead-hall.

Then among them strode Beowulf, carrying in one hand the great head of the sea woman and in the other the blistered hilt of the sword, snake-shaped, carven with

the legend of its forging. Beowulf related the story of his combat and added, "When I saw that Grendel's mother was dead I seized her head and swam upward again through the heaving waters, bearing the heavy burden with me; and as I landed on the shore of the lake I saw its waters dry behind me, and bright meadows with beautiful flowers take their place. The trees themselves put on new robes of green, and peace and gladness settled over all. God and my strong right hand prospered me, and here I show the sword with which the giants of old defied the eternal God. The enemies of God are overcome, and here in Heorot may Hrothgar and his counselors dwell in peace."

The King and his counselors gathered round about Beowulf, and looked with wonder and amazement on the head of the fierce sea monster and read with strange thrills of awe the wondrous history of the sword and the cunning work of its forgers.

Then to Beowulf, Hrothgar spoke in friendly wise, "Glorious is thy victory, O Beowulf, and great and marvelous is the strength that God hath given thee, but accept now in the hour of thy success a word of kindly counsel. When a man rides on the high tide of success he may think that his strength and glory are forever, but it is God alone who giveth him courage and power over others, and in the end all must fall before the arrows of death. God sent Grendel to punish me for my pride when I had freed the Danes and built my pinnacled mead-hall. Then when this despair was upon me he brought thee to my salvation. Bear then thy honors meekly, and give thanks to God that made thee strong. Go now into the feast and join thy happiness to that of my warriors."

That day the high walls of Heorot rang with the thunderous shouts of the warriors and echoed the inspiring words of the Skalds who sang of Beowulf's victory. When at last darkness settled o'er the towers and pinnacles of the palace, the grateful Danes laid themselves down to sleep in peace and safety, knowing

that their slumber would never again be disturbed by the old sea woman or her giant progeny.

After this combat Beowulf returned to his home, in time was made king, and at the end of a stormy life died from the wounds received in combat with the terrible fire-fiend which had wrought devastation in his realm. The dragon is brilliantly described as a winged fire-breathing serpent, provided with at least two feet, a head-covering of adamant and a soft and penetrable body. His chief defense consists in the poisonous fire of his breath, which so frightens Beowulf's companions that all fly excepting one, who remains to turn the battle in favor of his master; but Beowulf has inhaled the terrible poison, and, knowing himself to be dying, directs that his remains be burned on a headland and that a cairn be erected over them—

Which may for my folk for remembering of me,  
Lift its head high on the Hrones-ness;  
That sea-sailing men, soon in days to be,  
Call it “Beowulf's Barrow,” who, their barks afoam,  
From afar are driving o'er the ocean mists.

The treasure which Beowulf secured from the dragon is buried with the hero, and the poem ends with the solemn ceremonial of burning. The hoard which was guarded by the dragon had once been the property of an ancient king, who, grudging his treasure to posterity, had intrusted it to the keeping of the dragon after the following lament, which is one of the fine passages of the poem:

Hold thee here, O Earth, nor the heroes could not.  
Hold the wealth of earls! Lo, within thee long ago  
Warriors good had gotten. Ghastly was the life-bane  
And the battle death that bore every bairn away.  
All my men, mine own, who made leaving of this life!  
They have seen their joy in hall! None is left the sword  
to bear

Or the cup to carry, chased with flashes of gold,  
Costly cup for drinking. All the chiefs have gone else-  
where.

Now the hardened helm, high adorned with gold,  
Of its platings shall be plundered. Sleeping are the  
polishers,

Those once bound to brighten battle-masks for war.  
So alike the battle sark that abode on field  
O'er the brattling of the boards, biting of the swords,  
Crumbles, now the chiefs are dead. And the coat of  
ringèd mail

May far and wide no longer fare with princes to the field  
At the side of heroes. Silent is the joy of harp,  
Gone the glee-wood's mirth; never more the goodly hawk  
Hovers through the hall; the swift horse no more  
Beats with hoof the Burh-stead. Thus, unhappy did he  
weep

In the day and night, till the Surge of Death  
On his heart laid hold.

VI. ANGLO-SAXON METER. The form is blank verse, with every line divided into halves by a pause, which always comes at the end of a word, and, as the poems are sometimes printed in half lines, the number in such a poem as *Beowulf* is often given as six thousand. In each half line there are a number of measures, or feet, each consisting of a word or a number of words, of which the first bears a stress or emphasis. In every line there are at least two

syllables thus stressed, and in each line there are two which begin with a similar sound, producing the alliteration which is so conspicuous. In many lines there are one or more unstressed syllables, which, taken together, are called a *slur* and which are read with less force than the remainder of the line. When a monosyllabic word bears the stress and there is no slur following it there should be, in reading, a short pause, which we may call a *rest*. In such instances the stressed syllable and the rest together make up the measure or foot.

The Anglo-Saxon poets labored under great handicaps, not only because of the difficulty in handling a trochaic and alliterative measure, but also because of an impoverished vocabulary. Development was of necessity extremely slow. Fortunately for English verse, the drastic actions of the conquerors of England brought into the language the harmonious meters and rich vocabularies that had been formed by more gifted nations. The character of Anglo-Saxon Christian poetry of the epoch we are studying has been ably described by Jusserand, the French historian, as follows:

The full infusion of the Latin element, which is to transform the Anglo-Saxon into English, will take place several centuries hence, and will be the result of a last invasion. The genius of the Teutonic invaders continues nearly intact, and nothing proves this more clearly than the Christian poetry composed in the native tongue, and produced in Britain after the conversion. The same impetuosity, passion, and lyricism, the same magnificent apostrophes which gave its character to the old pagan

poetry are found again in Christian songs, as well as the same recurring alternatives of deep melancholy and noisy exultation. The Anglo-Saxon poets describe the saints of the Gospel, and it seems as though the companions of Beowulf stood again before us. One of them, St. Andrew, arrives in an uninhabited country; not a desert in Asia, nor a solitude in Greece; it might be the abode of Grendel. "Then was the saint in the shades of darkness, warrior hard of courage, the whole night long with various thoughts beset; snowbound the earth with winter casts; cold grew the storms, with hard hail showers; and rime and frost, the hoary warriors, locked up the dwellings of men, the settlements of the people; frozen were the lands with cold icicles, shrunk the water's might; over the river-streams the ice made a bridge, a pale water-road."

VII. CAEDMON. The first poem which, from fairly good evidence, we may believe to have been written in England, was composed by Caedmon probably about ten years before his death, which is supposed to have taken place in 680. If we accept the statements of Bede, and there is no better evidence to the contrary, Caedmon lived near the Abbey of Whitby in the time of the Abbess Hilda, and in all probability was a simple, unlettered farm servant, who, though he had the gift of poesy, was too timid to make it known, and when invited to sing at a banquet, fled.

On one occasion, as the mythical story goes, he ran to the stable where, as he was tending cattle, he fell asleep and dreamed that a spirit had commanded him to sing, and, in spite of his fears and objections, he found when he made the attempt that the words came readily

to him, and he sang his Creator's praise. On awakening, he remembered the verses which he had composed and recited them to his steward. The monks were attracted by the excellence of his verses and gave to Caedmon the opportunity to learn to read and understand the Scriptures. As a result he produced a metrical version which is known as *Caedmon's Paraphrase*.

There is now in existence but a single manuscript of this poem, which was discovered by Archbishop Ussher and is now preserved in the Bodleian Library. Although there may be some doubt as to the authenticity of it, yet the burden of evidence attributes it to Caedmon, on the strength of a description by Bede. The *Paraphrase* covers *Genesis* and *Exodus*, as well as other portions of Holy Writ. His account of the Creation begins as follows:

Ne waes her tha giet,	Nor had there here as yet,
nymthe heolster-sceado,	save the vault-shadow,
Wiht geworden; ac thes	Aught existed; but this
wida grund	wide abyss
Stod deop and dim —	Stood deep and dim —
drihtue fremde,	strange to its Lord,
Idel and unnyt.	Idle and useless.

Some of the best passages are those of a tender nature, such as the following description, rendered by Stopford Brooke:

Far and wide she flew,  
Glad in flying free, till she found a place  
Fair, where she might rest. With her feet she stept  
On a gentle tree. Gay of mood she was and glad,



Since she, sorely tired, now could settle down,  
On the branches of the tree, on its bearing mast  
There she fluttered feathers, went a-flying off again,  
With her booty flew, brought it to the sailor,  
From an olive-tree a twig, right into his hands  
Brought the blade of green.

The following description of Satan bound in Hell would seem to have suggested some ideas to Milton:

If I to any thane  
lordly treasure  
in former times have given  
while we in the good seats  
blissful sate;  
at no more acceptable time  
could he ever with value  
my bounty requite.  
If men for this purpose  
any one of my thanes  
would himself volunteer  
that he from here upward  
and outward might go;  
might come through these barriers,  
and strength in him had  
that with raiment of feather  
his flight he could take,  
and whirl through the welkin,  
where the new work is standing  
—Adam and Eve  
in the earthly realm  
with wealth surrounded—  
and we are cast away hither  
in these deep dales!

In this Bodleian manuscript there are several poems which are not considered as the genuine work of Caedmon, but were probably

produced by one of his followers. The most notable is a fragment of an elaborate poem on the story of Judith. This has been translated by Oliver Elton as follows:

Large is the face of our world, but she loosed not trust in  
His gifts,  
And sure was the sheltering grace of His hand, in her  
sharpest call  
To the Prince, who presides, far-famed, in the height, to  
protect her now  
From the worst of the Fear; and the Lord of His creatures  
willed her the boon  
For her fullness of faith in the glorious omnipotent  
Father enskied.  
And the heart grew fain, as I heard, within Holofernes  
the king,  
And he sent forth a bidding to wine, a banquet of bravery  
measureless  
For all the eldest of thanes in the orders of shielded  
fighters,  
And the chiefs of the folk came quick to that mighty  
captain of theirs.

And fourth was the day since the fairly-radiant  
Damsel had sought him, the deep-souled Judith;  
And they fared to the feast, his fellows in sorrow,  
And with lust of the wine-cup uplifted was every  
Breast of the warrior in battle-mail.

And they bore down the benches the beakers lofty  
Full cups and flagons for feasting in hall;  
And the soldiers seized them, the strong men in bucklers,  
Who were sealed—and their sovereign saw not—to death.  
And the giver of gold was gay with the revel,  
Holofernes, the fear and the friend of his earls,  
And he laughed aloud, and halooed and shouted  
In fierceness of mood, and far the tempestuous

Clamor was caught by the children of mortals  
As mad with the mead-cup he monished them often  
To bear themselves bravely at board and be men.  
Curst was his soul, and his company doughty he  
Drowned in their drink while the daylight held,  
And he whelmed them in wine, the warriors all,  
Till they lay at the last like dead men stricken, in languor  
lapped,

With good things gorged by their valorous giver of  
treasure. And he

Saw they were served as they sat in the feast-hall  
Till dusk had descended nigh on the world.

And he bade them, that soul of all sins commingled,  
To bring to his bed the blest among women,  
Bracelet-laden, and lordly with rings.

And swiftly his servants set to the will of  
The mailed ones' master, and made in a flash  
To the guest-room of Judith, of judgment deep.

And they found her, and fetched the fairest of ladies  
To his tall-arched tent, the targeted warriors,  
Where the lord Holofernes, the loathed of the Savior,  
Slept through the nights; and encircling the couch  
Was a curtain all netted of comeliest gold

For the captain of war and contriver of harms  
To watch on the warriors that went to his chamber,  
And be noted by none that came near him of mortals  
Whom he called not in quest of their counsel himself,  
The prince in his pride, from the proven in battle.

And they carried unto his couch the woman whose cunning  
was sure,

And the mind of the men was o'ercast as they went to  
their master with word

That the heavenly maid had been brought to the bower;  
and he, their lord

The leader of cities, the famous, was stirred to laughter of  
heart,

And was fain to defile the bright one and tarnish her  
fairness. God,

Wielder of war-men, and Guardian of might, and  
Awarder of fame,  
Kept the king from his deed, and let not the crime betide.  
Then his heart was hot with his lust, and he went, the  
hellish of soul,  
Mid the press of his princes, along to his bed, where the  
pride of his life  
Was to finish before the morn; not soft was the fortune  
here  
Of the monarch of many, the puissant of soul, but meet  
for his works  
On earth done under the sky, and his mind was empty  
of wit  
As he stumbled to sleep his fill, the chieftain sodden with  
wine.

Then strode the soldiers straight from the chamber,  
Drenched in their drink; they had drawn the detested one,  
False to his faith and fell to his people, the  
Last time on earth to his lair, in haste.

And the handmaid of God in her heart took counsel  
Swiftly to slay, as he slumbered, the terrible  
Lecher unclean, for her Lord; and His maiden  
With coiling tresses, caught from its scabbard  
A sword that was scoured into sharpness of temper;  
And next she besought by His Name the Redeemer of  
Men upon earth by His might in the firmament:  
Chief of Thy creatures and Child of Omnipotence,  
Spirit of comfort and Star of the Trinity,  
Give me Thy grace in my greatness of trouble.  
For my heart is afire within, and my soul is heavy, and  
sore  
Sunken in sorrow; be mine of Thy grace, O Sovereign  
above,  
Conquest, and keenness of faith that my sword shall cut  
him in twain,  
Murder's minister yonder! And mighty One, Master  
of all,

Glory-allotter to men, and great in Thy majesty, now  
Favor and save me, of mercy, in this my fullness of need;  
Wreak for the wrath and the flame of my soul a repayment. And soon  
He in the highest who sits made sharp her heart in its strength,  
As He may for us men who entreat Him aright and with meetness of faith;  
And the heart of the holy maid was enlarged, and her hope made new.

And hard she haled by the hair the idolater  
Deadly and hateful, and dragged him disdainfully  
Forth to her featly, to fall at her mercy.  
And the sword of the maiden with sinuous tresses  
Flickered and fell on the furious-hearted  
Bane of his foes, bit into his neck-bone.  
And drunken he lay there, drowned in a stupor,  
And life in him lingered, though large was his wound.  
And she smote with the strength of her soul once more  
At the heathenish hound, and the head rolled over  
Forth on the floor; and the filthy carrion  
Lay on the bed without life; but the spirit had  
Fared away far in the fathomless underworld,  
To be hampered in hell-pains and humbled eternally,  
Wreathen with serpents in regions of torment,  
Fettered and fast in the flame of perdition.  
He has done with our life; nor dare he have hope  
In the heart of the dark habitation of dragons  
Thence to depart, but he there must abide  
In that dwelling of dimness, undawned on of joy,  
Ever and ever for infinite ages.

VIII. CYNEWULF. There are extant a number of Anglo-Saxon poems of an elegiac nature, but of their authors we know little or nothing. In fact, besides Caedmon, there exists in this period only the shadowy figure of Cynewulf,

who must have lived about the eighth century. From his *Elene* we get some few facts concerning his life. From a youth spent in worldly pleasures he developed into a studious and religious old age, which he probably spent in one of the monasteries. He speaks of his having written, while a young man, some songs which were rewarded with golden gifts, but none of them survive. He was probably the author of other minor poems, but his chief production was the epic *Christ*, a prolix narrative of Christ's ministry, including His return to judgment. The following brief extract will give some notion of the nature of the poem:

Now 'tis most like as if we fare in ships  
On the ocean flood, over the water cold,  
Driving our vessels through the spacious seas  
With horses of the deep. A perilous way is this  
Of boundless waves, and there are stormy seas  
On which we toss here in this feeble world  
O'er the deep paths. Ours was a sorry plight  
Until at last we sailed unto the land,  
Over the troubled main. Help came to us  
That brought us to the haven of salvation,  
God's Spirit-Son, and granted grace to us  
That we might know e'en from the vessel's deck  
Where we must bind with anchorage secure  
Our ocean steeds, old stallions of the waves.

It is quite probable that had it not been for the irruption of the Danes, who subjugated practically all England except that part ruled by Alfred, a school of native poetry might have been established. There are evidences of a

genuine poetic talent, and had the bonds of ecclesiasticism been thrown off and the imagination of the writers allowed play England might have boasted of the first native poetry outside of the classics. As it was, however, the Anglo-Saxon bards were silenced by the invasion and poetry ceased to be written in that vernacular.

IX. ALFRED THE GREAT. We have referred to the scholarly Alcuin and to the Venerable Bede, whose learning in the Latin was as great as any men of their time, but, though Bede wrote a translation of the Gospel of St. John, he contributed little to the beginnings of an English prose. The distinction of having originated that should be given to King Alfred, who believed that Latin letters and Latin learning should be placed at the command of his subjects in their own tongue; he exerted himself in every possible way to bring this to reality. In the prefix to his translation of Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Care*, he says:

When I reflected how the teaching of the Latin language had recently decayed through this people of the Angles, and yet many could read English writing, then I began among other various and manifold businesses of this kingdom to turn into English the book that is called *Pastoralis* in Latin, and *Hierde Boc* in English, sometimes word for word, sometimes sense for sense, just as I learned it of Plegmund my archbishop, and of Asser my bishop, and of Grimbold my priest, and of John my priest. After I had learned it so that I understood it and could render it with fullest meaning, I translated it into English.

Alfred's translations were by no means literal, but they conveyed the substance of the writings translated and included a number of endless interpolations, which fitted them the better for his purpose. In another place he writes:

Therefore to me it seemeth better, if it seemeth so to you, that we also some books, those that most needful are for all men to be acquainted with, that we turn those into the speech which we all can understand, and that ye do as we very easily may with God's help, if we have the requisite peace, that all the youth which now is in England of free men, of those who have the means to be able to go in for it, be set to learning while they are fit for no other business, until such time as they can thoroughly read English writing: afterwards further instruction may be given in the Latin language to such as are intended for a more advanced education, and are to be prepared for higher office.

Some idea of his language may be gained from the following extract and its translation:

Gethenc hwilce witu us tha becomon for thisse woruld, tha we hit na hwaether ne selfe ne lufedon, ne eac othrum man num ne lyfdon. Thone naman anne we lufdon thaet we Christene waeron, and swithe feawa tha theawas.	Think what kind of punishments shall come to us for this world, if we neither loved it ourselves nor left it to other men. We have loved only the name of being Christians, and very few of the duties.
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Alfred the Great (849-901), the youngest son of Ethelwulf, was King of the West Saxons from 871 to his death. Not only was he a great warrior and able to overcome the Danes and



free his country, but he was also a progressive man, who, in periods of peace, rebuilt cities and fortresses, improved his fleet, stationed ships at intervals along the coast to guard against invasion, established a regular militia, promoted trade and commerce and made a code of laws which served as the basis of many later codes. No monarch of England better deserved the title of "the Great," for throughout his life he seemed to have no ambition but the good of his countrymen and to have ruled with a firmness that was always tempered by gentleness and justice. In estimating his character, too, we must remember that he stood for the joys of Christian civilization centuries before it became established throughout the West.

As a patron of letters, he not only encouraged others to write, but with remarkable good sense he translated for his people the best things that he could find. It is not always easy to determine what was translated by Alfred himself and what by his instructions, but the group of writings directly or indirectly attributable to him include Gregory's *Pastoral*, the *Ecclesiastical History* by the Venerable Bede, the *History* of Orosius, Gregory's *Dialogues* and the *Consolations* of Boëthius. The last, and the *Orosius* and *Pastoral Care*, are generally considered as having been translated by Alfred himself. Of them all the *Boëthius* is the most interesting, for it not only gives the best of that great writer's thought, but it best shows Alfred's originality and peculiar manner. Mr.

Stewart, one of the chief English authorities on Boëthius, says:

In view of Alfred's literary motive and personal tastes, the reader of his translations must not look for any strict adherence to the original. He expands and curtails as the spirit moves him. It is on his translation of Boëthius that his personality is most strongly impressed. That he had from the first no intention of adhering strictly to the text before him, either in thought or form, is shown by his changing the original arrangement of five books of alternate verse and prose into forty-two chapters, and by his substituting for the two persons of the dialogue Wisdom and Reason in place of Philosophy; and now the Mind, now Boëthius, now the personal pronoun in place of the Philosopher. His method of dealing with the difficulty and obscurity of the Latin is summary. He finds out the gist of the philosopher's meaning, and proceeds to adapt and weld it to his liking, as he thinks will be the most profitable to the readers of his time, adding here a homely illustration, there an explanatory note, now expanding the frequent sentences into a long paraphrase, and now cutting the knot of a long passage by the simple expedient of omission, and interpreting the whole by the light of Christian doctrine.

To show the nature of Alfred's style in the matter which he inserted into *Boëthius*, we quote the following paragraph, from Dr. Sedgefield's version:

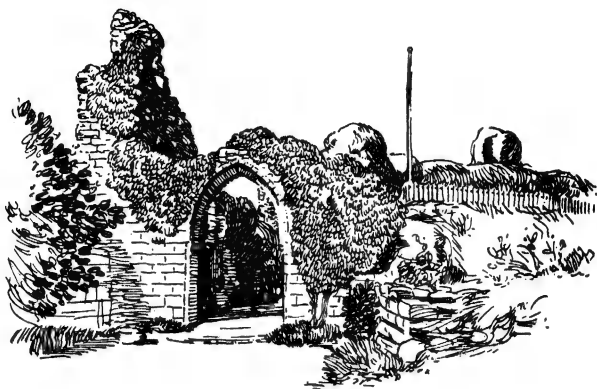
All creatures Thou hast made alike, and in some things not alike. Though Thou hast given one name to all creatures, naming them the World when taken together, yet Thou hast parted the single name among four creatures: one is Earth, the second Water, the third Air, the fourth Fire. To each of them Thou hast appointed its own separate place; each is kept distinct from the other, and yet held in bonds of peace by Thine ordinance,

so that none of them should overstep the other's bounds, but cold brooketh heat, and wet suffereth dry. Earth and water have a cold nature; earth is dry and cold; water wet and cold. Air is defined as both cold and wet and also warm. This is not to be wondered at, for air is created half-way between the dry cold earth and the hot fire. Fire is uppermost above all these worldly creatures. Wonderful is Thy contriving to have done both things: namely, to have bounded things one over against the other, and likewise to have mingled the dry cold earth beneath the cold wet water, so that the yielding and flowing water hath a home in the solid earth, being unable to stand alone. The earth holdeth the water and in some degree sucketh it in, and is maintained by what it sucketh, so that it groweth and beareth blossoms and likewise fruits; for, if the water did not moisten it, it would dry up and be scattered by the wind like dust or ashes. No living thing could enjoy the land or the water, nor dwell in either for the cold, if Thou hadst not in some measure mingled them with fire. With marvelous skill Thou hast so ordered that fire doth not burn up water and earth, when mingled with either; nor again do water and earth wholly quench fire.

Alfred's prose was simple, straightforward, rather devoid of ornament and poorly fitted to abstruse ideas, but it formed an excellent medium through which a writer could show his own personality, and a vigorous man like Alfred wrote vigorous prose naturally.



BRIDGE AT AMBLESIDE



### CHAPTER III

FROM THE NORMAN CONQUEST TO CHAUCER

**F**RENCH INFLUENCES. No greater change was ever wrought in the language of any people than that which eventually was produced in England by the Norman Conquest, yet the transformation came about so slowly that for a long time its progress was not recognizable. The light of Anglo-Saxon literature had apparently been quenched by the inroads of the Danes, yet somewhere in the hearts of the people there smoldered an unquenchable fire, which in time was to burst forth, modified in character, it is true, but still bearing all the heat and warmth of the original flame. The Normans, it will be remembered, were Scandinavians who came into France and rapidly acquired the more advanced civilization of the southern countries. Moreover, by intermarriage they developed a new and in many re-

spects an admirable character. They became more versatile, imitative, and with their naturally speedy acceptance of the new ideas were ready to be the leaders of a general progress. They became quick to discern, prompt to decide and nimble in their wits. They became more addicted to pleasure, but preferred that of a brilliant social life, and turned away from the coarser sort of amusements. The melancholy and grave thoughtfulness of the Scandinavians gave place to a brilliancy and gayety, which, however superficial, was still highly attractive. Such were the people who entered England, to find there a sturdy, self-reliant race, which had been much harried by the Danes and which partook largely of the same characteristics that were originally those of the Northmen.

William's victory was so complete that he was enabled to do whatever he wished, and in establishing his own followers as the nobility and gentry of the land he placed the Norman-French language above that of the people, so that Anglo-Saxon became the language only of the despised serving classes. By the end of the period under consideration, however, the Anglo-Saxon tongue had again acquired supremacy, though in accomplishing this revolution it had sacrificed much. In 1362 it was officially recognized and became the language of the courts of law, and in the next year in Parliament the opening speech was in the new English language.

The more showy productions of the Normans in England during this time belong rather to the history of French literature than to that of English, and our concern is principally with the formation of the new tongue. Fortunately, the Normans did not attempt to suppress Anglo-Saxon, but allowed the natives to use it among themselves as much as they pleased; but as there was no encouragement to literature, the more elegant forms of the language fell into disuse, until it was so impoverished that it contained little more than the words necessary for the purposes of practical life. When one considers the poverty of the vocabulary used by the ordinary laborers of to-day, he can understand how restricted had become the use of Anglo-Saxon words. Yet, their virility was so great that they gradually crept into the tongue of the rulers and formed the basis of the new language, as we have seen. The following conversation from Scott's *Ivanhoe* illustrates vividly the difference between the Anglo-Saxon and the Norman-French words. Wamba, the witless, is talking to Garth, the swineherd:

"What call you those grunting beasts running about on their four legs?" asked Wamba.

"Swine, fool, swine," said Garth; "every fool knows that."

"And swine is good Saxon," said Wamba, "but how call you the sow when she is flayed, and drawn and quartered, and hung up by the heels, like a traitor?"

"Pork," answered the swineherd.

"I am glad every fool knows that, too," said Wamba,

“and pork, I think, is good Norman-French, and so, when the brute lives, and is in charge of a Saxon slave, she goes by her Saxon name; but becomes a Norman, and is called *pork* when it is carried to the castle hall to feast the nobles; what does thou think of this, Garth, ha?”

“It is but too true, Wamba, however it got into thy fool’s pate.”

“Nay, I can tell you more,” continued Wamba, “there is old alderman Ox continues to hold his Saxon epithet while he is under the charge of serf and bondmen, but becomes *Beef*, a fiery French gallant, when he arrives before the worshipful jaws that are destined to consume him. Mynheer Calf, too, becomes *Monsieur de Veau* in like manner; he is Saxon when he requires tendance, and takes a Norman name when he becomes matter of enjoyment.”

It should be remembered that this was a period when classic learning was highly esteemed on the continent and prosecuted with great vigor everywhere. It was no longer confined to Church officials in the monasteries, but was finding its way among the upper classes through the great universities that were founded in the twelfth century. Oxford and Cambridge in England date from this period. The historian Green says:

A new fervor of study sprang up in the West from its contest with the more cultured East. Travelers, like Adelard of Bath, brought back the first rudiments of physical and mathematical science from the schools of Cordova or Bagdad. In the twelfth century a classical revival restored Caesar and Vergil to the list of monastic studies. The scholastic philosophy sprang up in the schools of Paris. The Roman law was revived by the imperialist doctors of Bologna. The long mental activity of feudal Europe broke up like ice before a summer’s sun.

During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries a radical change took place in metrical structure. As we have seen, the vigorous rhythm of Anglo-Saxon verse was produced by means of alliteration in accented syllables. The number of accents, but not the number of syllables in a line, was fixed, and rhymes, though they appeared occasionally, seemed to be accidental. The Norman-French, however, introduced into English poetry a rhythmical effect that depends upon the use of rhyme and a regular number of syllables. The excellent characteristics of each of these structures, the vigor of Anglo-Saxon accentuation and the graceful regularity of French rhyme and meter thus became united in English verse.

II. THE ARTHURIAN CYCLE. In France, as we have learned in another place, the *trouveres* were active at this time, with their long narrative poems full of legend, war and chivalry. Three different cycles were most popular, namely, those of which Charlemagne, Alexander and King Arthur are respectively the heroes. The two former we have studied at length in the history of France, but the last was reserved because of its great importance in English literature.

It was about the middle of the twelfth century that Henry II came to the throne; as he was a patron of literature and his Queen, Eleanor, had come from the very home of the troubadours and could make those songs which were sung at that time to the gay strains of



the lute, the continental legends were brought rapidly into notice among the cultivated English. There had been two Crusades to the Holy Sepulcher, and the returning knights had brought with them new poetical ideas. Chivalry, which we have studied at length in another place, had polished the manners of the people and become the ruling force in society. It exalted the office of the singer, and knights and great rulers were proud to be called verse-makers. Where such a spirit was abroad, it was inevitable that a number of remarkable writers should appear.

Among the first of these was Geoffrey of Monmouth, a Celt of the original British race. He was a priest under the patronage of the English court, and while in that position he wrote an extremely interesting history, which he declared was merely a translation from the ancient Cymric. In this we find for the first time the history of the famous King Arthur, his magician Merlin, and the story of the Knights of the Round Table. According to Geoffrey, Brutus, a great-grandson of Aeneas of Troy, fled with his household gods to Albion (England), where, after slaying a number of giants, among whom Gogmagog was chief, built the city of Troynovant (New Troy), which is now London. From him was descended the race of Britons, and from him in lineal descent came King Arthur, best and greatest of English kings. For many years people believed devoutly in the authenticity of this history,

and, although finally its mythical nature was established, yet at once Arthur and his knights began to figure in English literature and continued to do so until immortalized finally in Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*.

III. THE "ORMULUM." At the end of the eleventh or in the beginning of the twelfth century two great poems were written, the first of which, great only in bulk and in its interest for philologists, and now known only in fragments, is the *Ormulum*, so named "for that Orm wrought it." Orm, or Ormin, was an Augustinian monk, whose residence may have been in Lincolnshire, and his great work is a metrical paraphrase of portions of the Gospel, with metrical comments borrowed more or less from Bede and Pope Gregory. This remarkable poem, thoroughly Anglo-Saxon in spirit, produced little of its intended effect. The history of the manuscript is uncertain until it appeared in 1659 in the Library of Mynheer Vliet at Breda. Subsequently it was purchased by Franciscus Junius, the great collector of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, and was bequeathed by him to the Bodleian Library. The manuscript is "written on parchment on folio leaves very long and narrow (averaging twenty inches by eight) in a very broad and rude hand, with many additions inserted on extra parchment scraps." Upon the accidental survival of this manuscript depends wholly our knowledge of Orm and his work. Mr. Gollancz says: "Orm was a purist in orthography as well as in vo-

cabulary, and may fittingly be described as the first of English phoneticians. The *Ormulum* is perhaps the most valuable document we possess for the history of English sounds."

IV. LAYAMON'S "BRUT." The earliest English romance was Layamon's *Brut*, a lengthy poem of over thirty-two thousand lines, narrating the Arthurian legends in a verse in which Anglo-Saxon alliterative style is intermingled with French rhyme and meter. For the most part the poem is professedly a paraphrase of the *Brut* of the French poet Wace, written in 1155. There are, however, extensive additions which Layamon admits were taken partly from Bede, but chiefly from Welsh and other traditional sources, and a few passages by Layamon himself. As the name implies, the subject of the *Brut* is the mythical settlement of Britain by Brutus and his Trojans, and is the same in subject matter as the Arthurian romance included in the history of Geoffrey of Monmouth.

Layamon dwelt near the Welsh border, "at Ernley, at a noble church on the Severn's bank; it seemed to him good to be there. Fast by Radestone there he read books." In other words, he was a parish priest living upon the Severn within a few miles of Hartlebury, and close to his abode a cliff called Redstone overhangs the river at the present time. In the following manner Layamon frankly confesses that he compiled his tale:

Layamon leide theos boc,  
 & tha leaf wende.  
 he heoun leofliche bi-heold,  
 lithe him beo drihten.  
 fetheren he nom mid fin-  
 gren, & fiede on boc-felle,  
 & tha sothe word  
 sette to-gadere:  
 & tha thre boc  
 thrumde to ane.

Layamon laid before him  
 these books, and turned  
 over the leaves; lovingly  
 he beheld them. May the  
 Lord be merciful to him!  
 Pen he took with fingers  
 and wrote on bookskin,  
 and the true words set to-  
 gether; and three books  
 compressed into one.

Two manuscripts of the poem exist, one twenty or thirty years later than the other. The following passage will show considerable difference in these texts:

## EARLY TEXT

An preost wes on leoden,  
 Layamon wes ihoten;  
 he wes Leouenadhes sone;  
 lidhe him beo drihten:  
 he wonede at Ernleye,  
 at aedhelen are chirechen,  
 uppen Seuarne stathe  
 sel thar him thuhte:  
 on fest Radestone  
 ther he bock radde.  
 Hit com him on mode,  
 and on his mern thonke,  
 thet he wolde of Engle  
 tha aedhelaen tellen,  
 wat heo ihoten weoren.  
 and wonene heo comen,  
 tha Englene londe  
 aerest ahten  
 aefter than flode  
 the from drihtene com,  
 the al her a-quelde  
 quic that he funde.

## LATER TEXT

A prest was in londe,  
 Laweman was [i] hote:  
 he was Leucais sone;  
 lef him beo drihte:  
 he wonede at Ernleie,  
 wid than gode cnithte,  
 uppen Seuarne:  
 merie ther him thohte:  
 fastebi Radestone  
 ther he bokes radde.  
 Hit com him on mode,  
 and on his thonke,  
 that he wolde of Engeland  
 the rihtnesse tell,  
 wat the men hi-hot weren,  
 and wanene hi comen,  
 the Englene lond  
 aerest afden  
 after than flode  
 that fram god com,  
 that al ere acwelde  
 cwic that hit funde.

There was a priest on earth (or in the land), who was named Layamon; he was son of Leovenath, may the Lord be gracious to him!—he dwelt at Ernley, at a noble church upon Severn's bank—good it there seemed to him—near Radestone, where he books read. It came to him in mind, and in his chief thought, that he would tell the noble deeds of the English, what they were named, and whence they came, who first possessed the English land, after the flood that came from the Lord, that destroyed here all that it found alive.

A good specimen of the classic and vigorous style of the old poet is the following extract from Madden's prose version. Colgrim and his brother Baldulf have retreated to a hill after a defeat which has filled the channel of the Avon with the dead:

When Arthur saw, noblest of kings, where Colgrim stood, and eke battle wrought, then called the king keenly loud: "My bold thanes, advance to the hill. For yesterday was Colgrim of men keenest, but now it is to him as to the goat, where he guards the hill; high upon the hill he fighteth with horns, when the wild wolf approacheth toward him. Though the wolf were alone without any herd, and there were five hundred goats, the wolf to them goeth, and all them biteth. So will I now to-day Colgrim destroy; I am the wolf and he is the goat; the man shall die." Yet called Arthur, noblest of kings. "Yesterday was Baldulf of all knights boldest, but now he standeth on the hill and beholdeth the Avon, how the steel fishes lie in the stream. Armed with sword, their life is destroyed; their scales float like gold-drest shields; there float their fins, as if it were spears. There are marvelous things come to this land, such beasts on the hill, such fishes in the stream!"

V. THE "ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE." From the eighth to the twelfth century a number of

writers compiled the history of their own times into what is now known as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the most important English prose work prior to the fourteenth century. The writers had no thought of literary style, but simply recorded upon a board, used in the monasteries for indicating the proper day to keep Easter, their simple, readable accounts of the leading events of the year that had passed. Later, by the aid of Bede and Orosius, they carried the historical retrospect back to the days of Julius Caesar. It is almost certain that Alfred encouraged the work, and he may have taken some part in it himself. The four years from 893 to 897 contain the finest specimens of Anglo-Saxon prose, and for a quarter of a century more the *Chronicle* is meritorious. Thenceforward the accounts are more meager and of less excellence, showing the degeneracy of literary talent. The chief value of the *Chronicle* now rests in its interesting pictures of the times and the remarkably clear insight which it gives into the changes of the language during the four hundred years that elapsed between the beginning and the completion of the *Chronicle*. Many manuscripts survive, some of them bringing the account down to the beginning of the thirteenth century.

In the *Chronicle* of the tenth century, four poems on contemporary events are introduced. One is on the expulsion of the Danes from certain Mercian towns; another, on the coronation of Edgar; a third, on his death; the fourth,

celebrating the battle of Brunanburh (937), when Athelstan and his brother defeated the host of Danes and their allies. The song of triumph is in the same category with that of Miriam and Deborah, and has been translated by Tennyson and others. The version of Thorpe is less poetical, but more literal:

Departed then the Northmen  
In their nailed barks,  
The darts gory leaving  
On the roaring sea  
O'er the deep water  
Dublin to seek,  
Ireland once more  
In mind abashed.  
Likewise the brothers  
Both together,  
King and aetheling  
Their country sought  
In the West Saxons' land.  
In war exulting  
They left behind them  
The carcasses to share  
With pallid coat,  
The swart raven  
With horned neb,  
And him of goodly coat,  
The eagle white behind,  
The carrion to devour;  
The greedy war hawk,  
And that gray beast,  
The wolf in the weald.  
No slaughter has been greater  
In this island  
Ever yet  
Of folk laid low  
Before this

By the sword's edges  
 From what book tells us,  
 Old chroniclers,  
 Since hither from the east  
 Angles and Saxons  
 Came to land,  
 O'er the broad seas  
 Britain sought,  
 Proud war-smiths,  
 The Welsh o'ercame,  
 Men for glory eager,  
 The country gained.

VI. “PIERS PLOWMAN.” The fourteenth century was notable in the history of England, both politically and in a literary sense, for it culminated in the genius of Geoffrey Chaucer. Before considering him, however, there are a few other authors whom we should study. Passing by “Sir John Mandeville,” who claimed to be a great traveler, and who was supposed to have written an interesting and at one time very popular account of his wanderings, let us consider William Langland, who composed a long satiric poem known as *The Vision Concerning Piers the Plowman*. Most truly English, vigorous and popular, Langland was undoubtedly the greatest poet preceding Chaucer. Born about 1332, probably a native of Shropshire and the son of a freeman, he took minor orders in the Church and earned a scanty livelihood by singing psalms for the good of the souls of men. He makes many allusions to his extreme poverty, says that he was married and that in the year 1399, when he



wrote his last poem, he was in Bristol. Then he was about sixty-seven years of age, and it is probable that he did not long survive. He tells us that he bore the nickname "Long Will" because of his stature.

The importance of Langland's poem is generally recognized, but it is considered a poorer specimen of the English language than those of Chaucer and much closer to the Anglo-Saxon type. In sentiment it was indicative of the Reformation and of the political and literary revolution which finally placed the Anglo-Saxon element above the Norman. Representing himself as Piers, or Pierce, the plowman, he falls asleep on the Malvern Hills and beholds a series of visions, in describing which he exposes the corruption of society and, with much bitterness, the dissolute lives of the clergy. The dissatisfaction of the lower and the more thinking classes of English society is the theme of Langland, while that of Chaucer is the contented life of the aristocracy and the prosperous middle class. The poem opens with the following lines:

In a somer seson whan soft was the sonne,  
 I shope me in shroudes as I a shepe were,<sup>1</sup>  
 In habite as an heremite, unholy of workes,  
 Went wyde in this world, wondres to here.  
 Ac<sup>2</sup> on a May mornynge, on Maluerne hilles,  
 Me byfel a ferly<sup>3</sup> of fairy, me thouhte;  
 I was wery forwandered, and went me to reste  
 Vnder a brode bank by a bornes<sup>4</sup> side;

1 "Shepe," shepherd; it oftener means sheep.

2 But.

3 A wonder.

4 A brook or burn.

And as I lay, and lened, and loked in the wateres,  
I slombred in a slepyng, it sweyued so merye.<sup>5</sup>

Allegorical personification is frequent, and its nature is shown by the following extract:

ENVY AND AVARICE

Envy, with heavy heart, asketh after shrift,  
And greatly his *gustus*<sup>1</sup> beginneth to show,  
As pale as a pellet in a palsy he seemed;  
I-clothed in a *caramauri*,<sup>2</sup> I could him not describe,  
As a leek that had i-lain long in the sun,  
So looked he with lean cheeks; loured he foul.  
His body was bolled,<sup>3</sup> for wrath he bit his lips,  
Wroth-like he wrung his fist; he thought him to wreak  
With works or with words when he seeth his time. . . .  
And then came Covetise; can I him nought describe,  
So hungrily and hollow Sir Hervy<sup>4</sup> him looked;  
He was beetle-browed and babber-lipt also,  
With too bleared een as a blind hag,  
And as a leathern purse lolled his cheeks,  
Well syder<sup>5</sup> than his chin, they shrivelled for eld.  
And as a bondman of his bacon his beard was bedra-  
velled.<sup>6</sup>  
With an hood on his head, a lousy hat above,  
And in a tawny tabard of twelve winter age,  
Al to-torn and baudy, and full of lice creeping;  
But if that a louse could have loupén the better,  
She should nought have walked on the welt, it was so  
threadbare.

Many pictures are vivid, and not a few are repulsive exhibitions of vice, misery and cor-

5 Sounded so merry or pleasant. We may add that the late editors of “Piers the Ploughman” divide the lines in the middle, where a pause is naturally made.

1 “Gustus,” gestes, deeds.

2 A worm-eaten garment.

3 Swollen. 4 Mr. Skeat points out that Skelton has the name for a covetous man: “And Harvy Haffer, that well could pick a meal.”

5 Hanging lower. 6 As the mouth of a bondman or rural laborer is with the bacon he eats, so was his beard bedaubed or smeared.

ruption. The vision closes with the following lines, which have been somewhat modernized:

Now hath the Pope power pardon to grant the people,  
 Withouten any penance, to passen into heaven?  
 This is our belief, as lettered men us teacheth  
 (*Quodcumque ligaueris super terram, erit ligatum et in  
 celis, etc.*)<sup>1</sup>

And so I leave it verily (Lord forbid else!)  
 That pardon and penance and prayers don save  
 Souls that have sinned seven sins deadly,  
 But to trust to these triennales<sup>2</sup> truly me thinketh  
 Is nought so sicker<sup>3</sup> for the soul, certes, as Do-well.  
 Forthwith I rede you, renkes,<sup>4</sup> that rich ben on this earth,  
 Upon trust of your treasure triennales to have,  
 Be ye never the balder to break the ten behests,  
 And namely the masters, mayors, and judges  
 That have the wealth of this world, and for wise men  
 ben holden,

To purchase you pardon and the Pope's bulls.  
 At the dreadful doom when dead shallen rise,  
 And comen all before Christ accounts to yield,  
 How thou leddest thy life here and his laws kept'st,  
 And how thou didest day by day, the doom wil' rehearse;  
 A poke full of pardons there, ne provinciales teters,  
 Though they be found in the fraternity of all the four  
 orders,<sup>5</sup>

And have indulgences double-fold; but if Do-well you  
 help

I set your patents and your pardons at one pie's heel!<sup>6</sup>

Forthwith I counsel all Christians to cry God mercy,  
 And Mary his mother be our mene<sup>7</sup> between,  
 That God give us grace here ere we go hence,  
 Such works to work while we ben here,

1 Matthew xvi, 19.

2 Masses said for three years.

3 Sure.

4 Men; Anglo-Saxon "rinc," a warrior (Skeat).

5 The four orders of Friars.

6 "Pie's heel," magpie's heel, a curious expression. But the Cambridge manuscript has *pese hule*, that is, a pea's hull, a pea-shell, husk of a pea.—Skeat. The Cambridge manuscript is surely the correct reading.

7 "Mene," medium, Mediator.

That after our death-day, Do-well rehearse  
At the day of doom, we did as he hight.<sup>8</sup>

The following extract may be called *The Tower of Truth*:

Then shall you come to a  
    court  
    bright as the sun,  
The moat is of mercy  
    all about the manor,  
And all the walls are of  
    common-sense  
    to hold desire thereout;  
The battlements are of  
    Christendom  
    the kind to save,  
Buttressed with the faith  
    through which we may  
    be saved.  
All the houses are covered  
    halls and chambers.  
With no lead but with love-  
    as-brethren-of-one-birth.  
The tower in which Truth  
    is,  
    is set above the sun;  
    . . . . .  
He may do with the day-  
    star  
    what pleaseth him best.  
Death dare not attack  
    the thing that he de-  
    fendeth.  
Grace is called the gate-  
    keeper,  
    a good man in truth;  
His man is called “Amend-  
    thou,”

for many men know  
    him;  
Tell him this pass-word,  
    for Truth knows the  
    truth;  
“I performed the penance  
    that the priest on me en-  
    joined;  
I am sorry for my sins,  
    and so shall I ever be  
When I think thereon,  
    though I should be a  
    pope.”  
Bid “Amend-thou” hum-  
    ble him  
    to his master once,  
To raise up the wicket-gate  
    that closes the way,  
Though Adam and Eve  
    did eat to their ruin;  
For he hath the key to the  
    door-latch,  
    though the king may  
    sleep.  
And if grace is granted  
    thee  
    to go in in this way,  
Thou shalt see Truth him-  
    self  
    sitting in thy heart.  
Then see that thou love him  
    well  
    and observe his law. . . .

<sup>8</sup> Hight, commanded.

And then there are seven	"By Christ," cried a cut-
sisters	purse,
that serve Truth forever,	"I have no kin there!"
And porters and gate-keep-	"No," answered an ape-
ers	keeper,
that belong to the place.	"not for anything I
One is called Abstinence,	know."
and another Humility,	"Truly," quoth a traveler,
Charity and Chastity,	"if I knew this for sure,
both of them choice	I would never go forward a
maidens,	foot
Patience and Peace,	for any friar's preach-
many people to aid,	ing."
Bounty, the lady,	"Yes," said Piers Plough-
leadeth in full many.	man,
But whoso is related to	and exhorted them to
these sisters—	goodness,
so God help me!—	"Mercy is a maiden there,
. . . . .	and hath power over
Is wonderfully welcome	them all;
and fairly received.	She is akin to all sinful men
And except ye be akin	and her son also;
to some of these seven	And through the help of
It is full hard, by my head!	these two
for any of you all	(hope you for no other),
To get entrance at that gate	You may obtain grace
unless Grace be the	there,
greater.	if only you go be-times."

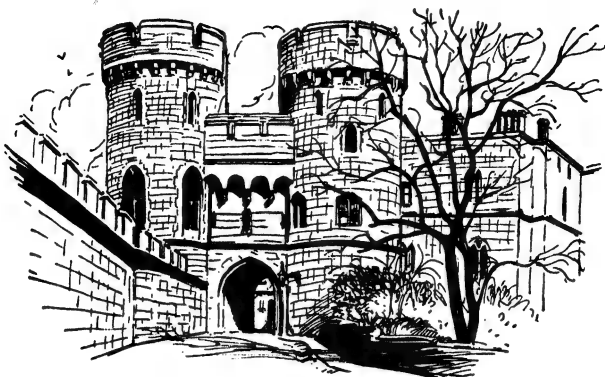
Langland was a moral teacher, earnest and unimaginative, and his popularity gave him a power at that time second only to Wyclif.

VII. WYCLIF. John Wyclif (whose name is also spelled *Wycliffe* and in many other ways) was born about 1324 near Richmond, in Yorkshire. He was educated at Oxford University, became master of Balliol College, and in that position we have the first historical mention

of him. From religious controversies at the university, he extended his teachings and efforts throughout England, in opposition to the clergy. A fiery speaker and a vigorous writer, he exerted a decided influence in bringing on the Reformation, but his power in England was never so great as in Bohemia, where John Huss took up his ideas.

In English literature his importance lies principally in the fact that he translated the Bible into the English tongue, and thus for the first time the people of England were able to read the Scriptures themselves. As a result, this version of the Bible became a powerful instrument in fixing the speech of the people and in giving a permanency to the literary forms of the language. A specimen of his translation is the following, from the eighth chapter of St. Matthew:

And oo scribe, or a man of lawe, commynge to, saide to hym, Maistre, I shal sue thee whidir euer thou shalt go. And Jhesus said to hym, Foxis han dichis, or borowis, and briddis of the eir kan nestis; but mannes sone hath nat wher he reste his heued. And Jhesus steyinge vp in to a litel ship, his disciplis sueden him. And loo! a grete steryng was made in the see, so that the litil ship was hiled with wawis; but he slepte. And his disciplis camen nig to hym, and raysiden hym, sayinge, Lord, saue vs: we perishen. And Jhesus seith to hem, What ben yee of litil feith agast? Thanne he rysynge comaundide to the wyndid and the see, and a grete pesiblenesse is maad. Forsothe men wonderden, sayinge: What manere man is he this, for the wyndis and the see obeishen to hym.



## CHAPTER IV

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

**H**IS LIFE. As nearly as can be ascertained, Geoffrey Chaucer was born about 1340 in the city of London, the son of a wine merchant, who must have been a man of means and a holder of public office. Of the poet's childhood we know very little, but by 1357 he was a page in the service of a member of the royal family, and two years later he engaged in King Edward's invasion of France, where he was taken prisoner. Soon after, he was liberated, the King himself paying part of his ransom. About 1366 he married Philippa, one of the Queen's ladies-in-waiting, and was given an annuity and a minor post at court.

In 1372 Chaucer was appointed envoy to Genoa on a commercial mission, which produced a marked effect on his genius. If he

was not already interested in Italian literature, he received an inspiration from Petrarch, if he did not actually meet him, and it was a Latin translation made by Petrarch of Boccaccio's story of Patient Griselda that subsequently was the subject of the Clerk's tale on the road to Canterbury. That Chaucer met Boccaccio also is quite likely; but, in any case, the English poet was only the first of a long line to be influenced by Italian poetry. Having discharged his mission successfully, Chaucer was made collector of customs for the port of London, for which he received the curious grant of a daily pitcher of wine, though this was afterward changed to a yearly payment of twenty marks. As collector he was compelled to keep his own books, and he complained that often after a day's work he sat over his accounts till he was fairly dazed. From 1372 to 1378 he was engaged on a variety of foreign missions, which increased his prosperity and enabled him to discharge by deputy his duties as collector. In 1386 he was elected knight of the shire for Kent, but at the end of the year he was suddenly deprived of his offices, probably for abuses in his collection of revenues. About that time he was defendant in a suit for abduction, but was cleared of the stain and restored partially to favor. He appears to have been poorly fitted for the duties of his various offices, and again fell into disgrace and want. In his *Complaint to His Purse* the poet alludes to this time:



To you, my purse, and to none other wight,  
Complain I, for ye be my lady dear,  
I am so sorry now that ye be light;  
For certes, but if ye make me heavy cheer,  
Me were as lief be laid upon my bier,  
For which unto your mercy thus I cry,  
Be heavy again, or else might I die!

With the accession of Henry IV he became again a royal favorite and lived in prosperity till his death, which, from an inscription on the tomb erected in 1555 in Westminster Abbey, occurred on October 25, 1400. His wife had died about thirteen years earlier; it is by some assumed that Chaucer had two natural sons, Thomas Chaucer, who was several times Speaker of the House of Commons, and Lewis, who probably died at about ten years of age. For this boy he wrote in prose a treatise on the astrolabe, and one might think from the following lines that the author looked somewhat askance at his English, though desirous of using it instead of Latin:

And Lewis, yif so be that I shewe thee in my lighte  
English as trewe conclusions touching this matere, and  
naught only as trewe but as many and as subtil conclusions  
as ben shewed in Latin in any commune tretis of  
the Astrolabie, con me the more thank.

Chaucer was a stout and jovial man, with fine, soft eyes peering out of a bright face, and by his gracious manners he readily gained the friendship of the leading men of his time. As Lowell says, "If character may be divined by works, he was a good man, genial, sincere,

hearty, temperate of mind, more wise perhaps for this world than the next, but thoroughly human and friendly with God and man."

II. HIS GENIUS. In a sonnet on Chaucer, our Longfellow has said:

He is the poet of the dawn, who wrote  
The Canterbury Tales, and his old age  
Made beautiful with song; and as I read,  
I hear the crowing cock, I hear the note  
Of lark and linnet, and from every page  
Rise odors of ploughed field or flowery mead.

Tennyson, who has called Chaucer "the morning star of song," says:

Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose sweet breath  
Preluded those melodious bursts that fill  
The spacious times of great Elizabeth  
With sounds that echo still.

Though Chaucer cannot be said to rank with Homer and Dante, yet his position is pre-eminent in the early literature of England, and among the later poets only Shakespeare, Spenser, Milton and Tennyson can be placed in the same category. Literature that in itself is delightful has true literary merit, and Chaucer's poems are the first early English productions that will bear the test, though centuries passed before his true rank was acknowledged. He was not learned, but was a lover of learning, a great reader and a ready and constant writer, as we may infer from these lines from the *Legend of Good Women*:

And as for me, though that I can but lyte,  
On bokes for to rede I me delyte,

And to hem geve I feyth and ful credence,  
 And in myn herte have hem in reverence  
 So hertely, that ther is game noon  
 That fro my bokes maketh me to goon.

While not particularly original, he was an excellent imitator, who never failed to add to the beauties of what he adapted. Most attractive, perhaps, of his many delightful traits is his strong and abiding love for nature and his skillful use of natural objects and phenomena for description and allusion. He was the poet of springtime and her unfolding beauties, and the daisy was his favorite flower:

And down on knees anon—right I me sette,  
 And, as I coude, this fresshe flour I grette;  
 Kneling alwey, til hit unclosed was,  
 Upon the smale, softe, swote gras.

Again, in the *Legend of Good Women*, he says:

Now have I than eke this conditioun,  
 That of all the floures in the mede,  
 Than love I most these floures white and rede,  
 Soch that men callen daises in our toun;  
 To hem I have so great affectioun,  
 As I sayd erst, whan comen is the May,  
 That in my bedde there daweth me no day,  
 That I nam up and walking in the mede,  
 To seen this floure ayenst the Sunne sprede,  
 Whan it upriseth early by the morrow.  
 This blisfull sight softeneth all my sorrow.  
 So glad am I, whan that I have presence  
 Of it, to done it all reverence,  
 As she that is of all floures the floure,  
 Fulfilled of all vertue and honore,

And every ylike faire, and fresh of hewe.  
And ever I love it, and every ylike newe,  
And ever shall, till that mine herte die,  
All sweare I now, of this I woll not lie.

The age in which he lived was coarse and gross, and indecencies crept into his work, but he was the spokesman for his times, and we have no right to infer that he was worse than others.

Chaucer's sense of humor was exceedingly keen, and he worked amusing incidents freely into his poems. On the whole, he was probably the greatest narrative poet that England has known. Of this phase of his genius, Lowell has written: "Chaucer's best tales run on like one of our inland rivers, sometimes hastening a little and turning upon themselves in eddies that dimple without retarding the current; sometimes loitering smoothly, while here and there a quiet thought, a tender feeling, a pleasant image, a golden hearted verse, opens quietly, as a water lily, to float on the surface without breaking it into a ripple."

Nearly every English writer has admired Chaucer's poetry, and most of them have spoken of him in highest praise. Occleve, a devoted friend and himself a writer of no mean power, says:

O mayster dere and fadir reverent,  
My mayster Chaucer, floure of eloquence.

Spenser spoke of his works as a "well of English undefiled." Elizabeth Barrett Browning writes:

And Chaucer with his infantine  
Familiar clasp of things divine.

III. HIS WRITINGS. In his earlier years Chaucer confined himself chiefly to translations, of which *The Book of the Duchess* is the first in existence, though it was probably preceded by the *History of the Lion* from Marchault. That he translated the whole of the *Romaunt of the Rose* is not believed generally, but that some portions of the translation are his is indubitable.

After Chaucer's visit to Italy his style began to change as he took Italian works for his models. Probably some of the *Romaunt* translation was done after his return from Rome, when *The House of Fame* was still incomplete. *Troylus and Cryseide*, the next to the most important of Chaucer's works, is largely an adaptation from Boccaccio and shows pointedly the influence of Dante and Petrarch. Of *The Complaint of Mars* and *The Parliament of Fowles*, the former was written before and the latter after *Troylus and Cryseide*, and during that time he was probably engaged in making his translation of Boëthius. *The Legend of Good Women*, probably written in 1385, was intended to give the history of nineteen celebrated women of antiquity, but the poet completed but nine sketches.

The inspiration of Chaucer seems to have been uncertain in duration, for of his more important works only the *Troilus* is completed, and in that he had the aid of Boccaccio's work.

Yet that he was persistent and not easily discouraged or depressed is indicated by the fact that it was not long after his dismissal from office that he began on the framework of the greatest of his productions, *The Canterbury Tales*. Already some of the stories had been completed as independent works, but the prologue was probably written about 1388.

Chaucer's dialect is that of the middle of England, that which now is the cultivated speech of the country, but he uses a great number of French derivatives, as was necessary if he would write musical poetry, for the scanty Anglo-Saxon vocabulary was inadequate for his varied purpose. However, he is not difficult to read even now, and a limited glossary will enable one to overcome most of the trouble, which emanates from archaic forms and obsolete words. In reading aloud the meter requires that *e* final, unless followed by a vowel at the beginning of the next word, and *e* before a final consonant always should be given the value of a syllable.

IV. “THE PARLIAMENT OF FOWLES.” The spirited allegory which bears this name was written on the marriage of Richard II to Anne of Bohemia. The eagles are Richard and Anne; the two tercels represent two princes to whom she had been betrothed previously.

The poet begins by telling of his reading from Cicero's *On the Republic* that part which gives Scipio's dream of the immortality of the soul, of which he gives the following abstract:

First telleth it when Scipion was come  
 In Affricke, how he meteth Massinisse,  
 That him for joy, in armes hath ynvine;<sup>1</sup>  
 Then telleth he his speach and all the blisse  
 That was betwixt hem til the day gan misse,  
 And how his anncester, Affrikan so dere,  
 Gan in his slepe that night til him appere.

Then telleth it that from a sterrie place,  
 How Affrikan hath him Cartage shewed,  
 And warned him before of all his grace,  
 And said him, what man lered eyther lewde,<sup>2</sup>  
 That loveth common profite well ithewde,<sup>3</sup>  
 He should into a blissful place wend,  
 There as the joy is without any end.

Then asked he, if folke that here been dede  
 Have life and dwelling in another place?  
 And Affrikan said, "Ye, without any drede,"<sup>4</sup>  
 And how our present lives space  
 Ment but a maner death, what way we trace,  
 And rightfull folke shull gon after they die  
 To Heaven, and shewed him the Galaxie.

Then shewed he him the little earth that here is  
 To regard of the Heavens quantite,  
 And after shewed he hym the nine speris,<sup>5</sup>  
 And after that the melodie heard he,  
 That commeth of thilke speres thrise three,  
 That welles of musicke been and melodie  
 In this world here, and cause of armonie.

Then said he him, sens Earth was so lite,  
 And full of torment and of harde grace,  
 That he ne should him in this world delite.  
 Then told he him, in certain yeres space,  
 That every sterre should come into his place—

<sup>1</sup> Taken.<sup>2</sup> Learned or ignorant.<sup>3</sup> Conducted, behaved.<sup>4</sup> Doubt, fear.<sup>5</sup> Spheres.

There it was first, and all should out of mind  
That in this world is done of all mankind.

Then prayed him, Scipion, to tell him all  
The way to come into that Heaven blisse.  
And he said: “First know thy selfe immortall,  
And loke aie besely that thou werche and wisse  
To common profite, and thou shalt not misse  
To come swiftly unto that place dere,  
That full of bliss is and of soules clere.

And breakers of the law, soth to saine,<sup>6</sup>  
And likerous<sup>7</sup> folke, after that they been dede,  
Still whirle about the world alway in paine  
Till many a world be passed out of drede;  
Then shullen they come to that blisfull place,  
To which to comen, God send thee grace.”

Having read till nightfall, the poet was compelled to lay aside his book and retire, where in the quickly coming sleep he dreamed of Scipio Africanus the Elder, who, it seemed, took him by the hand, complimented him on his industrious reading and led him into a park walled with green stones and filled with many kinds of trees in luxuriant foliage. On every limb were singing birds, while the ground was covered with beasts of many kinds, both small and great. Many allegorical personages were there also—Pleasure, Lust, Beauty, Flattery, Cupid and others—and before a strong temple of brass sat Peace and beside her pale-faced Patience. Within the perfumed temple sat Venus, with Bacchus by her side, Ceres next, and Cupid. Upon the wall were paintings repre-

<sup>6</sup> Truth to tell.

<sup>7</sup> Lecherous, wicked.



senting the stories of Semiramis, Hercules, Pyramus and Thisbe, Tristram and Iseult, Paris, Cleopatra and a host of others.

Walking among the trees, the poet discovered that this was St. Valentine's Day and that birds of every kind in vast numbers had come to choose their mates:

There might men the royall egle find,  
That with his sharpe looke perseth the Sun,  
And other egles of a lower kinde,  
Of which that clerkes<sup>1</sup> well devisen<sup>2</sup> con;  
There was the tyrant with his fethers don,<sup>3</sup>  
And grene, I mean the goshaue that doth pine<sup>4</sup>  
To birdes, for his outrageous ravine.<sup>5</sup>

The gentle faucon, that with his fete distreineth  
The kings hand, the hardy sperhaue eke,  
The quail's foe, the merlion that peineth  
Himself full oft the larke for to seke,  
There was the dove, with her eyen meke,  
The jelous swan, ayenst his deth that singeth,  
The owl eke, that of deth the bode<sup>6</sup> bringeth.

The crane, the geaunt,<sup>7</sup> with his trompes<sup>8</sup> soune,  
The thief the chouch, and the chattering pie,  
The scorning jaye, the eles<sup>9</sup> foe the heroune,  
The false lapwing, full of treacherie,  
The stare,<sup>10</sup> that the counsaile can bewrie,<sup>11</sup>  
The tame ruddocke,<sup>12</sup> and the coward kite,  
The cocke, that horiloge is of thorpes lite.<sup>13</sup>

The sparowe Venus' son, and the nightingale  
That clepeth<sup>14</sup> forth the fresh leaves new,

<sup>1</sup> Scholars.<sup>2</sup> Understand.<sup>3</sup> Dun.<sup>4</sup> Devour, torture.<sup>5</sup> Ravenousness.<sup>6</sup> Foreboding.<sup>7</sup> The giant crane.<sup>8</sup> Trumpet.<sup>9</sup> Eel's.<sup>10</sup> Starling.<sup>11</sup> Discover.<sup>12</sup> Robin red-breast.<sup>13</sup> That is, the clock of little towns.<sup>14</sup> Calleth.

The swalowe, murdrer of the bees smale  
That maken honie of floures fresh of hew,  
The wedded turtell<sup>15</sup> with his herte true,  
The pecocke, with his angel fethers bright,  
The fesaunt, scorner of the cocke by night.

The waker<sup>16</sup> gose, the cuckowe ever unkind,  
The popingeey, full of delicasy,  
The drake, stroier<sup>17</sup> of his owne kind,  
The storke, wreker of aduoutry,  
The hote cormeraunt, ful of glotony,  
The ravin and the crowe, with her voice of care,  
The throstell olde, and the frostie feldefare.

What should I say? of foules of every kind,  
That in this worlde have fethers and stature,  
Men might in that place assembled find,  
Before that noble goddess of Nature,  
And eche of them did his busie cure,<sup>18</sup>  
Benignely<sup>19</sup> to chese, or for to take  
By her accorde, his formell<sup>20</sup> or his make.<sup>21</sup>

Nature holds on her hand a beautiful female eagle, for whose possession three tercels debate. After a long discussion, Nature decides that the eagle shall make her own choice, but recommends the royal bird as the “gentlist and most worthy.” The female decides that she prefers to wait a year; Nature consoles the disappointed suitor with the words, “A yere is not so long to endure,” and the assembly of birds is dispersed. Chaucer, awakening, took other books, hoping to read and find other things to do, “and thus to rede I nill not spare.”

<sup>15</sup> Turtle-dove.

<sup>16</sup> Watcher.

<sup>20</sup> Female.

<sup>17</sup> Destroyer.

<sup>21</sup> Mate.

<sup>18</sup> Care.

<sup>19</sup> Wisely.

V. "THE HOUSE OF FAME." This allegory shows "how the deeds of all men and women, be they good or bad, are carried by report to posterity." The poet is seized suddenly by an eagle, which carries him far above the stars to the summit of a high and almost inaccessible mountain of ice, on which stands the House of Fame. On the sides of the mountain are engraved the names of great men, but only those on the north persist, as the others are melted away by the rays of the sun. The minstrels and great harpers of all time, with hosts of musicians behind them, appear upon the turrets. The interior of the hall is plated with gold overlaid with pearls. The Goddess of Fame sits upon a dazzling throne, leading up to which from the door are rows of metal pillars, on which stand the great historians and poets: Josephus on one of lead and iron; Statius on another of iron painted with tiger's blood; Vergil on tinned iron; Ovid on copper; Lucan and others on pillars of iron. The poet is next led to the labyrinth of Rumor, a curious building sixty miles long, with doors as numerous as the leaves of the trees, and in this strange hall are chiefly sailors, pilgrims and others, who spend most of their time hearing and telling the news. The poem is closed abruptly by the awakening of the author while he is in the midst of this description.

VI. "THE LEGEND OF GOOD WOMEN." The poet says that being desirous of seeing the daisy's first opening to the day he passed the

night in a garden, and while sleeping there had a vision :

And from afer come walking in the mede  
 The god of Love, and in his hand a quene,  
 And she was clad in real habite grene;  
 A fret of golde she hadde next her heer,  
 And upon that a white crowne she beer,  
 With flourouns smale, and I shal nat lye,  
 For al the worlde right as a daysye  
 Y-corouned is with white leves lyte,  
 So were the flourouns of her coroun white;  
 For of a perle, fine, oriental,  
 Hire white coronne was y-maked al,  
 For which the white coroune above the grene  
 Made her like a daysie for to sene,  
 Considered eke her fret of gold above.  
 Y-clothed was this mighty god of Love  
 In silke enbrouded, ful of grene greves,  
 In-with a fret of rede rose leves,  
 The freshest syn the worlde was first bygonne,  
 His gilte here was corouned with a sonne,  
 In stede of golde, for hevynesse and wyghte;  
 Therwith me thoght his face shon so brighte  
 That wel unnethes myght I him beholde,  
 And in his hande me thoght I saw him holde  
 Two firy dartes, as the gledes rede,  
 And angelyke his winges I saw sprede.  
 And, al be that men seyn blinde is he,  
 Algate me thoghte that he mighte se;  
 For sternely on me he gan by holde,  
 So that his looking doth my herte colde.

The God of Love berates him, accusing him of holding it folly to serve love, as he has proved both in the *Romance of the Rose* and *Troilus*, wherein he made light of woman's constancy. The beautiful lady intercedes for the

poet, and he is pardoned on condition that he shall spend most of his life in writing the story of good women, maidens and wives that were true and loving; and in telling of false men who betrayed them. This, then, is his penance, to speak well of love; and he proceeds to give the legends of Cleopatra, Thisbe, Dido, Medea, Lucretia, Ariadne, Philomena, Phyllis and Hypermnestra. Grown weary of his task, the poet stopped here, though he had intended to write ten more, closing his task with Alcestis, which he proposed to make a panegyric on Queen Anne herself.

The first three are the best, as though gradually the poet's task of incessant praise grew nauseous. Here is a spirited passage from the Cleopatra:

She made hir subtil workmen make a shryne  
 Of al the rubees and the stones fyne  
 In all Egypte that she koude espye;  
 And putte ful the shryne of spicerye,  
 And let the corps embawme, and forth she fette  
 This dede corps, and in the shryne it shette  
 And next the shryne a pitte than doth she grave,  
 And alle the serpentis that she myght have  
 She put hem in that grave, and thus she seyde:—  
 “Now, love, to whom my sorweful herte obeyde  
 So ferforthely that fro that blissful houre  
 That I you swor to ben al frely youre,  
 I mene you, Antonius, my Knight,  
 That never waking in the day or nyght  
 Ye nere out of myn herte's remembraunce,  
 For wele or woo, for carole or for daunce;  
 And in myself this covenant made I tho,  
 That ryght swych as ye felter wele or wo,

As ferforth as it in my powere lay,  
 Unreprovable unto my wyfnood ay,  
 The same wolde I felen, life or deethe;  
 And thilke covenant, while me lasteth breathe,  
 I wol fulfille; and that shal wel be seene,  
 Was never unto hir love a trewer queene.

And wyth that worde, naked, with ful good herte,  
 Among the serpents in the pit she sterte;  
 And ther she chees to have her buryinge.  
 Anon the neddres gon her for to styng,  
 And she her deeth receveth with good cheere,  
 For love of Antony that was so deere.

VII. “TROYLUS AND CRYSEIDE.” *Troilus and Cressida*, to use modernized spelling, shows perhaps more directly than any other poem the influence of Italian literature on Chaucer. In the first place, nearly six hundred lines, a third of the poem, are a translation from Boccaccio’s *Filostrata*, yet there is plenty of originality in the method of treatment, and Chaucer created one character not found in his Italian model. Pandarus, the amiable and disinterested friend of the lovers, is, however, exactly formed on Italian models, a half-serious, half-comical creation that often appears in Italian tales. Chaucer, moreover, excels Boccaccio in the better character he gives to Troilus and the masterly manner in which he delineates the development of the character of Cressida as she yields to the wooing of Troilus and then to Diomedes. Even in the latter part of her career, when Cressida forfeits respect in deserting the fascinating Troilus, Chaucer is able to keep pity alive for her. However, he

never looks for the deep meaning of the tragedy, but contents himself with its superficial aspects.

The plot proceeds logically and in an orderly manner, something that had not occurred in any earlier poem in our language. Rossetti's characterization of the poem is, "the very topmost blossom and crown of the chivalric passion and gallantry, and the exquisite first fruits of that humorous study of character in which our national writers have so specially excelled."

VIII. THE PROLOGUE OF "THE CANTERBURY TALES." All of Chaucer's other poems are wholly eclipsed by the brilliancy of his masterpiece, *The Canterbury Tales*. Using once more the time-honored frame upon which Boccaccio's *Decameron* is built, Chaucer imagines that there met at the Tabard Inn in Southwark, England, about thirty people, representing nearly all classes of society and types of mankind, drawn together by the one common interest of a pilgrimage to the tomb of Thomas à Becket at Canterbury. It was proposed that they should travel together, and to while away the time each person was to tell to the others two tales, one on the journey to the shrine and the other on the return. The teller of the best tale was to be given a feast by the other pilgrims. Chaucer failed to complete his work, and but two dozen tales now exist, some of which were written before he had decided upon his framework.



BECKET'S SHRINE  
CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

MARKING SPOT WHERE BECKET WAS MURDERED IN 1170.





The prologue, like that of the *Legend of Good Women*, is one of the finest portions of the work. The beginning of it is as follows:

When that Aprile with his showers swoot  
The drought of March hath pierced to the root,  
And bathed every vein in such liquour  
Of which virtue engendered is the flower;  
When Zephyrus eke with his sweete breath  
Inspired hath in every holt and heath  
The tender croppes, and the younge sun  
Hath in the Ram his halfe course yrun,  
And smalle fowles maken melody,  
That sleepen all the night with open eye,—  
So pricketh hem nature in hir courages—  
Then longen folk to go on pilgrimages,  
And palmers for to seeken strange strands,  
To ferne hallows couth in sundry lands;  
And specially, from every shires end  
Of Engeland, to Canterbury they wend,  
The holy blissful martyr for to seek,  
That hem hath holpen when that they were sick.

Befell that in that season on a day,  
In Southwark at the Tabard as I lay,  
Ready to wenden on my pilgrimage  
To Canterbury with full devout courage,  
At night were come into that hostelry  
Well nine and twenty in a company  
Of sundry folk, by aventure yfalle  
In fellowship, and pilgrims were they all,  
That toward Canterbury woulden ride.  
The chambers and the stables weren wide,  
And well we weren eased at the best.  
And shortly, when the sunne was to rest,  
So had I spoken with hem evereach-one,  
That I was of hir fellowship anon,  
And made forward early for to rise  
To take our way there-as I you devise.  
But natheless, while I have time and space,

Ere that I further in this tale pace,  
 Me thinketh it accordant to reason,  
 To tellen you all the condition  
 Of each of hem, so as it seemed me,  
 And which they weren, and of what degree,  
 And eke in what array that they were in :  
 And at a knight then will I first begin.

A Knight there was, and that a worthy man,  
 That from the time that he first began  
 To riden out, he loved chivalry,  
 Truth and honour, freedom and courtesy.  
 Full worthy was he in his Lordes war,  
 And thereto had he ridden, no man farre,  
 As well in Christendom as in Heatheness,  
 And ever honoured for his worthiness.

At many a noble army had he be.  
 At mortal battles had he been fifteen,  
 And foughten for our faith at Tramassene  
 In listes thries, and aye slain his foe.  
 This ilke worthy knight had been also  
 Sometime with the lord of Palatie,  
 Again another heathen in Turkey :  
 And evermore he had a sovereign pris.  
 And though that he were worthy he was wise,  
 And of his port as meek as is a maid.  
 He never yet no villainy ne said  
 In all his life unto no manner wight.  
 He was a very perfect gentle knight.  
 But for to tellen you of his array,  
 His horse were good, but he ne was not gay ;  
 Of fustian he weared a gipon,  
 All besmuted with his habergeon,  
 For he was late ycome from his viage,  
 And wente for to do his pilgrimage.

Charles Cowden Clarke has made an excellent prose rendering of the prologue, from which we take the following passages :

## PROLOGUE OF "THE CANTERBURY TALES" 8175

The Knight was accompanied by his son, a youth about twenty years of age, who acted as his Squire. The person of this young man was tall and well-proportioned, of great strength and activity. Being a bachelor and a lover, he was delicately attentive to his external appearance. His hair, which flowed in rich and natural curls upon his shoulders, was carefully disposed. Hoping to win his lady's favor, he had behaved with bravery in three several expeditions—in Flanders, in Artois, and in Picardy. His gown, which was short, with long open sleeves, was as fresh and gay as a spring meadow embroidered with flowers. Singing and piping all day long, he was as cheerful as the month of May. In addition to all these graces, he was a fine horseman, a tasteful writer of songs, excelled in the tournament and the dance, could write and draw with ease and elegance, and, what is esteemed a principal accomplishment in a squire of high degree, he was worthy to carve at table before his father. Courteous, humble, and dutiful was this fair young man, and withal so devoted to his lady-love that he would out-watch the doting nightingale.

One other attendant, and no more, had our Knight upon the present occasion, a Yeoman, dressed in a green coat and hood. He had a head like a nut, and a face of the same color. In his hand he carried a sturdy bow, and at his side under his belt a sheaf of bright sharp arrows, winged with peacock feathers. His arm was defended by a bracer; on one side hung a sword and buckler, and on the other a well-appointed dagger, keen as a spear. At his breast hung a silver ornament, also a horn, the girdle or baldrick of which was green. He was a thorough forester, and skillful in all manner of woodcraft.

There was also in our company a Nun, a Prioress, called Madam Eglantine, a demure and simply-smiling lady, whose sharpest speech was, "By Saint Eloi!" She could chaunt by heart the whole of the divine service, sweetly twanging it through her nose. She was mistress of the French language, as it is spoken at the school of

Stratford-le-Bow, but the French of Paris was to her unknown. Her conduct at meals was precisely well-bred and delicate, all her anxiety being to display a courteous and stately deportment, and to be regarded in return with esteem and reverence. So charitable and piteous was her nature that a dead or bleeding mouse in a trap would wring her heart. She kept several little dogs, which were pampered with roast meat, milk, and the finest bread. Bitterly would she take on if one were ill-used or dead. In short, she was all conscience and tender heart.

To speak of her features: her nose was long but well-shaped; her eyes light and gray as glass; her mouth delicately small, soft, and red; and her forehead fair and broad. For dress she wore a neatly-made cloak and a carefully-crimped neckerchief; on her arm was a pair of beads of small coral, garnished with green, from which depended a handsome gold brooch with a great A engraved upon it, and underneath the motto, "*Amor vincit omnia*" (Love overcomes all things).

The next in succession was a Monk, one well calculated to rule his order. He was a bold rider and fond of hunting. A manly man, and worthy to have been an abbot. Many a capital horse had he in stall, and as he rode along one could hear his bridle jingling in the whistling wind like the distant chapel bells.

Our Monk set but little store by the strict regulations of the good old saints, holding rather with modern opinions. For instance, he cared not the value of a straw for that one which denies that a monk can be a hunter and at the same time a holy man, or that out of his cloister he is like a fish out of water. And, indeed, there is some reason in his objection, for, as he would say, "Why should he pore all day over his books till his brain is turned, or apply himself to handicraft labor as St. Augustin ordains? Let St. Augustin stick to his day-labor!" For himself, he was a good hard rider outright, and kept his greyhounds, which were as swift as swallows

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before rain. Coursing was his sole pleasure, and to gratify it he spared no cost.

I noticed that his sleeves were embroidered with the finest gray fur, and his hood fastened under his chin with a curiously chased gold clasp, at one end of which was wrought a true lover's knot. His head was bald and shone like glass; his face too seemed as though it had been anointed. His eyes were deeply set, and kept rolling in his head, which glowed and steamed like a furnace. He had anything but the air of a mortified and *ghostly* father, indeed a roast swan was his favorite dish. A fine and stately horse, as brown as a berry, and boots supple and without a wrinkle, completed the equipment of this choice specimen of a prelate.

There was a Friar, a limiter, who, though in appearance a solemn man, was a wanton and merry wag. No man in all the four orders of brotherhood was such an adept in dalliance and smooth speech. Many a young girl had he joined in wedlock free of expense. He was the very prop and stay of his order. He was a favorite with all the country round, and especially cherished by the good dames of the town, for being a licenciante, he was, by his own account, as great in hearing confession as a curate. Sweetly would he dispense the duties of shrift, and pleasant was his absolution. Whenever he expected a handsome pittance the penance he enjoined was always light, for it is a sign a man has been well shriven when he makes presents to a poor convent.

His tippet was constantly stored with articles of cutlery and knick-knacks, which he distributed among the good wives in his perambulations. To these pleasant qualities, which made him everywhere a welcome guest, he added the grace of being a performer on the lute and a merry singer. In figure he was as well made and strong as a champion of wrestlers, and the skin of his neck was as white as the lady-lily.

He wore a short cloak of double-woven worsted, round as a lady's dress, uncrushed. He would lisp in his

speech from wantonness, or to give effect to his English, and while he was singing his eyes would twinkle like the stars in a frosty night. The name of this worthy limiter was Hubert.

There was a Merchant with a forked beard, and dressed in a motley suit, with a Flemish beaver hat. His boots were of the best manufacture, neatly clasped. He sat high upon his horse, and delivered his opinions in a solemn tone, always sounding forth the increase of his winnings. He was for having the sea securely guarded, for the benefit of trade, between Middleburgh and Orwell. His skill and knowledge in the various exchanges of money were remarkable, and so prudently did he order his bargains and speculations that he was esteemed a man of credit and substance.

There was a Clerk, or scholar, of Oxford also, who was deeply skilled in logic. His horse was as lean as a rake, and he himself was not overfed, but looked hollow and staidly sober. His surtout cloak was of the threadbare class; for he had hitherto obtained no living, and not being a man of the world he was unfit for an office. He had rather have at his bed's head twenty books of Aristotle and his philosophy than the costliest wardrobe and furniture. Though a philosopher, however, he had not yet discovered the golden secret of science, but all that he could scrape from his friends was forthwith spent in books of learning. Fervently would he pray for the souls of those who would assist him to purchase instruction, for study was the sole care of his life. In conversation he never uttered a word more than was necessary, and that was said with a modest propriety, shortly and quickly, and full of meaning. His discourse was pregnant with morality, and he as gladly afforded as received instruction.

A Sergeant-at-Law, cautious and shrewd, who had been often at consultation, was there also. A prudent and deferential man. He had been frequently appointed justice of assize by patent and commission. Many were the fees and robes with which he had been presented on

## PROLOGUE OF "THE CANTERBURY TALES" 8179

account of his great legal knowledge and renown. There was no purchaser like him, and his dealings were above suspicion. He was the busiest of men, and yet he seemed more busy than he was. He had at his fingers' ends all the terms, cases, and judgments from the time of the Conquest, and in his indictments the man was clever that could detect a flaw. He knew all the statutes by heart. He rode in a plain coat of mixed cloth, fastened with a narrow-striped silken girdle.

A country gentleman, commonly called a Franklin, was in our company. He had a fresh-colored, rosy face, and a beard as white as a daisy. A sop in wine was his favorite morning beverage, for he was a true son of Epicurus, believing that the most perfect happiness consisted in perfect enjoyment. He possessed a noble mansion, and was the most hospitable of entertainers. He dined at quality hours—always after one o'clock—and so plenteously stored was his table that his house may be said to have snowed meat and drink—fish, flesh, and fowl, and of these the daintiest. His suppers were furnished according to the season. Many a fat partridge had he in his preserve, and stewed bream or pike was a common dish at his board. Ill befel his cook if the sauce were too pungent, or his dinner not punctually served. He kept open house, and the dining table in hall remained covered the whole day.

He had been at several times justice of the peace, sheriff, steward of the hundred court, and knight of the shire. Among all the country gentlemen round there was not his compeer. At his girdle, which was as white as morning milk, hung a dagger and a silken purse.

A Haberdasher and a Carpenter, a Weaver, a Dyer, and a worker of Tapestry, members of a solemn and large fraternity, were all clothed in the same costume. Their furniture was all spick and span new. Their knives were not of the common description, mounted with brass, but wrought with pure silver. Their girdles and pouches also were equally costly. Each seemed to be of the respectable class of burgesses who take the uppermost seats



in the Guildhall. Their grave and sensible demeanor befitted them for the office of aldermen. They were men of landed estate and wealthy in cattle, and this their wives had no objection to, for it is a fine thing to be styled "*Madam*," and to walk, with your train supported like a queen, in the first ranks to church.

The company had a Cook with them upon this occasion. He was the man of all others to tell you a draught of London ale out of a hundred. No one could match him in roasting and boiling; his made-dishes, potted beef, raised pies, and blanc-manges were absolutely eminent.

There was a Shipman, or merchantman too, a west-countryman; I think he came from Dartmouth: he rode upon a hack—as well as he was able—and wore a gown of coarse stuff, which came down as low as his knee, also a dagger suspended by a lace from his neck under his arm. The hot summer had made his face all brown—he was a fine, hearty-looking fellow. Many and many a cask of wine had he brought from Bourdeaux while the merchants were fast asleep in their beds. He was not remarkable for tenderness of conscience, seeing that if he were engaged at sea, and had got the upper-hand, he always sent his prisoners home *by water*. But for skill in reckoning his tides, for knowing all the currents, shallows, and sandbanks, the exact place of the sun, the age of the moon and for the complete art of piloting, there was not his equal between Hull and Carthage. He was a brave and prudent man, whose beard many a tempest had shaken. He was intimate with every harbor from Gothland to Cape Finisterre, and every creek in Spain and Brittany. His ship was called the *Magdalen*.

A good Wife of Bath made one of our company. She was unfortunately rather deaf, and had lost some of her teeth. She carried on a trade in clothmaking, which excelled the manufacturers of Ypres and Ghent. No wife in all the parish could take precedence of her at mass, and if one ever so presumed she was wrath out of all charity. The kerchiefs which adorned her head on Sun-

days were of the finest web, and I dare swear weighed a pound. Her hose were of a brilliant scarlet, gartered up without a wrinkle, and her shoes tight and new. She had been ever esteemed a worthy woman, and had accompanied to church five husbands in her time. Having thrice traveled to Jerusalem, crossing many a strange river, and having visited Rome, Saint James's, Cologne, with its three kings, and passed through Galicia, she had a world of intelligence to communicate by the way. Her dress consisted of a spruce neckerchief, a hat as broad as a target, a mantle wrapping her fair large hips, and on her feet was a pair of sharp spurs. She rode upon an ambling pony. In company she took her share in the laugh, and would display her remedies for all complaints in love: she could play a good hand at that game.

There was also a religious man, who was a poor village Parson, yet was he rich in holy thought and works, as well as in learning—a faithful preacher of the gospel of Christ, full of gentleness and diligence, patient in adversity, and forbearing. So far was he from distressing for his tithes, that he disbursed his offerings and almost his whole substance among his poor parishioners. A pittance sufficed him. The houses in his parish were situate far asunder, yet neither wind and rain nor storm and tempest could keep him from his duty, but with staff in hand would he visit the remotest, great and small, rich and poor. This noble example he kept before his flock—that first he himself performed what he afterwards preached, joining this figure with his admonition, "If gold will rust, what will not iron do?" For if a priest in whom we confide become tarnished, a wonder if the frail layman keep himself unpolluted. The priest should set an example of purity to his flock, for how shameful a sight is a foul shepherd and cleanly sheep!

He did not let out his benefice to hire, and desert his flock to run up to London for the purpose of seeking promotion, but steadily kept home, and guarded well the fold. He was the true shepherd, and no hireling. Moreover, holy and virtuous as he was, he turned an eye of

pity upon the sinful man, mingling his lecture with discretion and benignity. It was the business of his life, by good example, to lead his fellow-creatures gently to heaven. The obstinate and stiff-necked, however, whether in high or low estate, were sure to receive from him a severe rebuke. A better priest I know not, far or near. He craved neither pomp nor reverence, or betrayed any affected scrupulousness of conscience, but the doctrine of Christ and his apostles he taught with simplicity, first following it himself.

He had a brother with him, a Ploughman, who had in his time scattered many a load of dung: a thorough hard laborer, living in peace and perfect charity with all men. Above all things, and at all times, he best loved his God and Creator, and then his neighbor as himself. When it lay in his power he would finish a job of threshing for a poor man without hire. He paid his tithes fairly and punctually, both of his produce and live stock. He was dressed in a tabard, and rode upon a mare.

The Miller was a hardy churl, brawny and large of bone. He always bore away the prize ram in wrestling matches. He was short shouldered, broad and stubby. Massive indeed was the door that he could not heave from its hinges or crack with the butting of his head. His beard was sandy, like a fox or a sow, and cut broad and square in the shape of spade. He had a wart on his nose, adorned with a tuft, red as the bristles of a hog's ear. His nostrils were wide and black, his mouth gaped like a furnace. He was a roaring, roystering madeap, who upon occasion would try the strength of his conscience by filching his customers' corn and giving them false tales. Yet, withal, he had "a thumb of gold," as the old saying goes respecting honest millers, and I believe was no worse than his brethren. He wore a white coat with a blue hood, and a sword and buckler at his side. He was a performer on the bag-pipe, and with it marshalled us out of town.

. . . . .

At day-spring up rose our host, and was chanticleer to the whole company, collecting us together in a flock, and forth we rode at a walking pace to the watering place of St. Thomas, when he drew up his horse and said, "My masters, you bear in mind your covenant. Now let us see who shall tell the first tale, and, so sure as I drink ale or wine, whoever shall rebel against my judgment shall pay all the costs of the journey. Before we proceed farther, draw lots, and let him who draws the shortest begin."

"Sir Knight," said he, "my lord and master, be pleased to draw: and come you near, my Lady Prioress: and you, Sir Clerk, oblige us by laying aside your bashfulness and your studying: so—every man lay hand."

After each had drawn, the lot fell upon the Knight, to the satisfaction of the whole company.

When this worthy man found he must abide by the general covenant, he said, "Since I am fated to begin this sport, in Heaven's name welcome be the lot. Let us ride on, and listen to my tale."

With cheerful countenance he then began, and said as you shall hear.

IX. SOME OF THE TALES. The more noted tales are *Palamon and Arcite*, told by the Knight; *The Lady Constance*, by the Man of Law; *The Court of King Arthur*, by the Wife of Bath; *Griselda*, by the Clerk; *Cambuscan*, by the Squire; *The Death Slayers*, by the Pardoner; *The Murdered Child*, by the Prioress, and *The Cok and the Hen*, *Chauntecleer and Pertelote*, by the Nonne Preeste. Each of these is discussed below:

1. *The Knight's Tale*. *Palamon and Arcite* was taken by Chaucer from Boccaccio's *Teseide*, and has been frequently used by dramatists and story tellers:

Theseus, King of Athens, having conquered the Amazons, married Ippolita and brought her and her young sister Emily home to Athens. On the way he was met by a company of ladies clad all in black, who claimed that Creon, King of Thebes, had slain their husbands and declined to give them decent burial. Theseus was so angered that he proceeded to Thebes, fought with Creon hand to hand, and won the great battle. At night, while the soldiers of Theseus were stripping the bodies of their slain enemies, they found beneath a heap of slain two young Theban princes, Palamon and Arcite, who still retained some life. The two, having been restored to health, were taken to Athens, and, in spite of their pleas for freedom, were closely confined in the palace. From the window they observed Emily walking in the garden. Both fell in love with her and quarreled violently, in spite of their friendship and relationship. One day, King Perithous, an intimate friend of Theseus, came to Athens, and, recognizing Arcite as a friend of long standing, succeeded in obtaining his liberty, but only on the penalty of death should he ever return to Athens. Palamon remained in prison, but the state of the two differed little, for, while neither could hope to win the lady, one had his liberty and the other could every day see Emily.

Arcite, however, was unable to remain at home, and having dreamed that Mercury advised him to return to Athens, he went there

in disguise, obtained service as a page to Emily, and in seven years rose to prominence and favor at the King's court. Just at this time Palamon, who had been in prison all these years, succeeded in escaping, and, having hidden in the palace garden, overheard Arcite bewailing his inability to win the love of Emily. Unarmed as he was, he challenged Palamon to fight, but the chivalric youth declined an immediate meeting, declaring, however, that he would come on the morrow with a suit of armor and weapons, and then they would fight on equal terms. While in the midst of their savage combat early the next morning, the King, accompanied by the Queen and Emily, approached the place, stopped the combat, and the identity of the two knights was made known to the King. His anger was great, and he would have condemned both to death had not the women interceded. As it was, he liberated both on condition that at the end of fifty weeks they should return, each followed by one hundred knights, and contend in a tournament, the winner of which should have the fair Emily.

Theseus made extravagant preparations for the tournament, erected temples to Mars and Venus, and provided everything necessary for a gorgeous display. At the appointed time, Palamon and Arcite appeared with their following, and the tournament was as noble a struggle as had been anticipated. Palamon was overthrown, and Emily was judged the prize of the victor, but as Arcite was going to

meet her, he was thrown from his horse and his chest so terribly crushed that he had no hope of living. Emily's grief was uncontrollable, but before he died Arcite consoled her, asked for Palamon, became reconciled with him, and advised Emily to marry his surviving friend. In time the dying knight's wish was carried out, and Palamon secured his bride.

This is one of the finest of *The Canterbury Tales*, and the descriptions of the temples and the tournament are in Chaucer's best vein.

2. *The Man of Law's Tale*. In the Man of Law's tale, *Lady Constance*, we are brought to early Christian times:

The daughter of the Emperor of Rome is betrothed to the Sultan of Syria, who has offered to become a Christian in order to win his bride. On her arrival, the Sultan's mother, an ambitious and wicked woman, invites to dinner the Sultan, his bride and all who have been engaged in bringing her thither, and all the guests, with the exception of the Lady Constance, are slain. She is put alone into a boat with the property she brought with her and set adrift. A very devout woman, she prays to the Virgin for protection, and after suffering many perils her boat is blown ashore on the coast of Northumberland, where the constable and his wife, Hermegild, rescue the Princess and become much attached to her. The Britons of Northumberland are all pagans, and Lady Constance does not dare to disclose her identity or announce for some time that

she is a Christian. However, finally, by restoring a blind man to sight through her prayers to the Virgin, she converts the constable, his wife and King Alla of Northumberland.

Alla and the Lady Constance are married, but soon thereafter he is compelled to go on a warlike expedition and leave his young wife at home. In course of time, Constance gives birth to a beautiful boy, and sends a letter announcing the fact to the King. The bearer, however, is devoted to the King's mother, a pagan filled with hatred for Constance. By getting the messenger drunk, the King's mother secures the letter which Constance has written, and substitutes in the place of it another telling the husband that his boy is a hideous deformity, the object of witchcraft. Alla's love is strong enough, however, for him to bear up under this announcement, and he sends a reply full of love to his wife. The old woman secures this missive in the same manner as the other, and substitutes for it an order to the constable to set Constance adrift in a boat with her child.

Once more at the mercy of the waves, she is driven back into the Mediterranean, landed near Rome, and carried before the Emperor, who fails to recognize her. Not long after, King Alla, having discovered the deception practiced against him, causes his mother to be executed, and then, repenting of his act, goes to Rome to obtain pardon for his sin. While



there he recognizes his wife and her boy, she confesses to the Emperor that she is the daughter long since supposed to be dead, and the tale ends with the happiness of all the principal characters.

3. *The Wife of Bath's Tale*. The Wife of Bath told a story of the court of King Arthur:

A handsome and vigorous young knight of King Arthur's court met one day a beautiful young woman, whom in a fit of passion he mistreated and in punishment therefor was condemned to death, but the Queen and the ladies of the court sympathized with him and obtained a reprieve. The King having placed the offender in charge of the Queen, she told him to go away for a year and a day and then return and answer the question, "What is that which women most desire?" If he should be successful, she would grant him pardon for his first offense. During his journey the knight asked the question of all manner of people, but received no answer which seemed satisfactory, and indeed no two answers which agreed. One person claimed that women desired most to gratify their curiosity, and told the story of King Midas's wife, who was unable to keep the secret of her husband's deformity, but whispered it to the rushes. At last he came upon a group of beautiful women dancing, but as he approached, they vanished, and he discovered in their place a hideous old woman, bent double and sitting on the green. The time of his probation was nearly exhausted, and he

put the question to the old hag. In return for his oath that he would grant the first request she made, she whispered the secret to the young knight; he returned to court, and before the assembled knights and ladies announced that what women most desired was to obtain dominion over their lovers and husbands. All decided that this was the best answer, and the knight was given his freedom, amid much rejoicing.

Thereupon the old woman appeared and demanded that he should marry her, and despite his objections, the knights and ladies decided that as he had given his oath, he must keep it. After the marriage the hideous wife complained of the treatment she received, and the knight protested that as she was ugly, old, poor and of ignoble extraction, he could not be expected to have any affection for her, but she talked so convincingly of the virtue of poverty, the respect due to old age, the fugitive nature of beauty and the religious duty of a husband that the young man was convinced of her value and began to feel some affection for her. The old hag then asked him whether he would rather she should be to him a true and humble wife who would never displease him, or young and beautiful, but subject to the temptations of the court. After a moment's thought, the young knight assured her that he preferred her as she was. Then, when he kissed his wife, he found that she was not only good and true, but also extremely beautiful.

4. *The Clerk's Tale. Griselda, or The Patient Griselda*, is an old tale for which Chaucer is indebted to the *Decameron* of Boccaccio, and it has been used many times by writers in almost every department of literature. The character of the poor and humble heroine, married to the Marquis of Saluzzo, may be gleaned from the following:

This marquis hath hir spoused with a ryng  
Brought for the same cause, and then hir sette  
Upon an hors snow-whyt, and wel amblyng,  
And to his palys, with no further let,  
(With joyful peple, that hir ladde and mette)  
Conveyed hire, and thus the day they spende  
In revel, til the sonne gan descende.

And shortly forth this tale for to chace,  
I say, that to this newe marquisesse  
God hath such favour sent hir of his grace,  
That it seemed not by any liklynesse  
That she was born and fed in rudenesse,  
As in a cote, or in an oxe stalle,  
But nourisht in an emperoures halle.

To every wight she waxen is so deere  
And worshipful, that folk where she was born,  
And from hir birthe knew hir yer by yere,  
Scarce trowed thay, but dorst have boldly sworn,  
That to Janicle, of which I spak biforn,  
No daughter she were, for as by conjecture  
They thought she was another creature.

For though that ever vertuous was she,  
She was encreased in such excellence  
Of maners goode, i-set in high bountee,  
And so discret, and fair of eloquence,  
So benigne, and so digne of reverence,  
And coude so the peples hert embrace,  
That ech hir loveth that lokith in hir face.

Nought only of Saluces in the toun  
Publisshed was the bountee of hir name,  
But eek byside in many a regioun,  
If one sayd wel, another sayd the same.  
So spredde wide her bounte and her fame,  
That men and wommen, as wel yong as olde,  
Go to Saluces upon hir to byholde.

Thus Walter lowly, nay but royally,  
Weddid with fortunat honestetee,  
In Goddes pees lyveth ful esily  
At home, and outward grace ynough hath he;  
And for he saw that under low degree  
Was ofte vertu y-hid, the peple him helde  
A prudent man, and that is seen ful selde.

Nought only this Grisildes thurgh hir witte  
Knew al the wayes of wifly homlynesse,  
But eek when that the tyme required it,  
The comun profyt coude she wel redresse;  
Ther was no discord, rancour, or hevynesse  
In al that lond, that she coude not appese,  
And wisly bryng them alle in rest and ese.

Though that hir housbond absent were anon,  
If gentilmen, or other of hir contree,  
Were wroth, she wolde brynge them at one,  
So wyse and rype wordes hadde she,  
And judgement of so gret equitee,  
That she from heven sent was, as men wende,  
Peple to save, and every wrong to amende.

No matter what cruelties and abuse are heaped upon Griselda, no matter how severely her faithfulness and obedience are tested, she comes forth triumphant, and her husband is finally reconciled to her.

5. *The Squire's Tale*. Briefly the Squire's tale is as follows: Cambuscan, a king of Tartary, is astonished one day by seeing a knight, mounted on a brass horse, ride into his ban-

quet hall and by hearing him announce that he is the ambassador of the King of Arabia and has brought the horse as a present. The mirror which the strange knight carries has the magical property of reflecting the unseen and showing the future to its fortunate possessor, and any woman looking in it may learn all the secrets of her husband. To Canace, the exquisitely beautiful daughter of Cambuscan, the ambassador gives a ring, whose virtue is such that if she wear it upon her thumb or in her purse she immediately understands the language of every bird that flies and is able to reply to it in kind. Besides, through its magic properties she learns the curative properties of all herbs. A sword, too, is among the gifts, a magic sword, so powerful that it will cleave through any armor and give a wound which never heals unless the owner of the weapon lays it flat upon the cut.

The greatest gift, however, is the brazen horse, upon whose back the King may ride to any place he desires by merely mounting and turning a pin concealed in its ear. When he has ridden long enough, by turning another pin the horse is made to descend, and at night, by turning the pin and giving his command, the horse disappears to return whenever wanted.

The tale of the Squire, which starts out so promisingly, was never completed by Chaucer, though it contains some incidents not alluded to here. Spenser attempted to finish it in the

*Faerie Queene*, but no one is satisfied with his version.

6. *The Pardoner's Tale*. After preaching a sermon on gluttony, strong drink, gambling and profanity, the Pardoner tells *The Tale of the Death-Slayers*:

Three riotous men, who in a drunken bout heard of the death of a companion, set forth to find and slay the being, Death, who puts a stop to the pleasures of every one. On their way they met an old man and inquired if he did not wish to meet Death, to which the old man replied that he could not meet him, as he could find no one willing to swap youth for his age. When the ribald youths asked him where Death could be seen, the aged man told them at the foot of a tree up a neighboring lane. When the young men arrived at the tree, they found a heap of gold, and forgetting the object of their excursion, they gathered the florins, but hesitated to take them home before night for fear their treasure would be discovered on them. Desiring, however, to continue their debauch, it was agreed that the youngest should go to the village and bring out a supply of food and drink. No sooner had he gone than the other two plotted to murder him on his return, so that the gold might be divided between the two. The youngest was also fired with a desire to possess all the money, and while he was in the village procured poison, which he put into two bottles of wine and carried to his friends. The result may easily be imag-

ined: the two elder knaves kill the youngest, but when feasting are themselves poisoned.

7. *The Prioress' Tale. The Murdered Child* is a pathetic little tale:

A Christian boy who learned hymns to the Virgin without understanding the words, but with a full appreciation of their meaning, sang them in Latin on his way to and from school in a great city of Asia. As he was passing through their quarter of the city, some vile Jews were offended by his singing, set upon him, cut his throat and threw him into a pit. When he did not return, his mother searched for him and found the little body, from whose lacerated throat the song was still proceeding. After the murderers had been taken and executed, the abbot of the near-by abbey, in preparing to bury the child, inquired why he continued to sing in so miraculous a manner, and the little boy responded by saying that the Holy Virgin had appeared to him and placed a grain on his tongue, telling him to sing until the grain was removed, when she would come and take him away to everlasting happiness. So the holy abbot removed the grain from the child's tongue, and the sweet young voice was silent, after which the infant martyr was laid away in a tomb of fair marble.

8. *The Nonne Preestes Tale.* The priest, who was an escort to Madame Eglentyne, told the old story of *The Tale of the Cok and Hen, Chauntecleer and Pertelote*, which is here reproduced, with a few omissions indicated:

A povre widwe somdel stope<sup>1</sup> in age,  
 Was whylom dwelling in a narwe cotage,  
 Bisyde a grove, stondyng in a dale.  
 This widwe, of which I telle yow my tale,  
 Sin thilke<sup>2</sup> day that she was last a wyf,  
 In pacience ladde a ful simple lyf,  
 For litel was hir catel and hir rent<sup>3</sup>;  
 By housbondrye, of such as God hir sente,  
 She fond hir-self, and eek hir doghtren two.  
 Three large sowes hadde she, and namo,  
 Three kyn, and eek a sheep that highte Malle.  
 Ful sooty was hir bour, and eek hir halle<sup>4</sup>,  
 In which she eet ful many a sclendre meel.  
 Of poynaunt sauce hir neded never a deel.  
 No deyntee morsel passed thurgh hir throte;  
 Hir dyete was accordant to his cote.  
 Repleccioun ne made hir nevere syk;  
 Attempree dyete was al hir phisyk,  
 And exercyse, and hertes suffisaunce.  
 The goute lette<sup>5</sup> hir no-thing for to daunce,  
 No poplexye shente<sup>6</sup> nat hir heed;  
 No wyn ne drank she, neither whyt ne reed;  
 Hir bord was served most with whyt and blak,  
 Milk and broun breed, in which she fond no lak,  
 Seynd<sup>7</sup> bacoun, and somtyme an ey<sup>8</sup> or tweye,  
 For she was as it were a maner deye<sup>9</sup>

A yerd she hadde, enclosed al aboute  
 With stikkes, and a drye dich with-oute,  
 In which she hadde a cok, hight Chauntecleer,  
 In al the land of crowing nas<sup>10</sup> his peer.  
 His vois was merier than the merye organ  
 On messe-dayes that in the chirche gon;  
 Wel sikerer<sup>11</sup> was his crowing in his logge<sup>12</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> Faster than a walk.

<sup>2</sup> Since that.

<sup>3</sup> Her property.

<sup>4</sup> Bower and hall.

<sup>5</sup> Hindered.

<sup>6</sup> Hurt.

<sup>7</sup> Singed.

<sup>8</sup> Egg.

<sup>9</sup> Sort of dairy-woman.

<sup>10</sup> Was not.

<sup>11</sup> Surer.

<sup>12</sup> Lodging.



Than is a klokke, or an abbey orlogge<sup>13</sup>.  
 By nature knew he ech ascensioun<sup>14</sup>  
 Of equinoxial in thilke toun;  
 For whan degrees fiftene were ascended,  
 Thanne crew he, that it mighte nat ben amended  
 His comb was redder than the fyn coral,  
 And batailed, as it were a castel-wal.  
 His bile was blak, and as the leet<sup>15</sup> it shoon;  
 Lyk asur were his legges, and his toon<sup>16</sup>,  
 His nayles whytter than the lilie flour,  
 And lyk the burned gold was his colour.  
 This gentil cok hadde in his governaunce  
 Sevene hennes, for to doon all his plesaunce,  
 Whiche were his sustres and his paramours,  
 And wonder lyk to him, as of colours.  
 Of whiche the faireste hewed on hir throte  
 Was cleped faire damoysele Pertelote.  
 Curteys she was, discreet, and debonaire,  
 And compaignable, and bar hir-self so faire,  
 Sin thilke day that she was seven night old,  
 That trewely she hath the herte in hold  
 Of Chauntecleer loken in every lith<sup>17</sup>,  
 He loved hir so, that wel him was therwith.  
 But such a loye was it to here hem singe,  
 Whan that the bryghte sonne gan to springe,  
 In swete accord, "my lief is faren in londe<sup>18</sup>."  
 For thilke tyme, as I have understonde,  
 Bestes and briddes coude speke and singe.

And so bifel, that in a dawenyng,  
 As Chauntecleer among his wyves alle  
 Sat on his perche, that was in the halle,  
 And next him sat this faire Pertelote,  
 This Chauntecleer gan gronen in his throte,  
 As man that in his dreem is drecched sore.  
 And whan that Pertelote thus herde him rore,

<sup>13</sup>Horologe.

<sup>14</sup>He knew the time every hour of the day.

<sup>15</sup>Jet.

<sup>16</sup>Toes.

<sup>17</sup>Locked in every limb.

<sup>18</sup>My beloved is gone to the country.

She was agast, and seyde, "o herte deere,  
 What eyleth yow, to grone in this manere?  
 Ye ben a verray sleper, fy for shame!"  
 And he answerde and seyde thus, "madame,  
 I pray yow, that ye take it nat agrief:  
 By God, me mette<sup>19</sup> I was in swich meschief  
 Right now, that yet myn herte is sore afright.  
 Now God," quod he, "my swevene<sup>20</sup> rede<sup>21</sup> aright,  
 And keep my body out of foul prisoun!  
 Me mette, how that I romed up and doun  
 Withinne our yerde, wher as I saugh a beste,  
 Was lyk an hound, and wolde han maad areste  
 Upon my body, and wolde han had me deed.  
 His colour was bitwixe yelwe and reed;  
 And tipped was his tail, and bothe his eres  
 With blak, unlyk the remenant of his heres;  
 His snowte smal, with glowinge eyen tweye.  
 Yet of his look for fere almost I deye;  
 This caused me my groning, douteles."  
 "Avoy!" quod she, "fy on yow, herteles!  
 Allas!" quod she, "for, by that God above,  
 Now han ye lost myn herte and al my love;  
 I can nat love a coward, by my feith.  
 For certes, what so any womman seith,  
 We alle desyren, if it mighte be,  
 To han housbondes hardy, wyse, and free,  
 And secree<sup>22</sup>, and no nigard, ne no fool,  
 Ne him that is agast of every tool,  
 Ne noon avauntour<sup>23</sup>, by that God above!  
 How dorste ye sayn for shame unto youre love,  
 That any thing mighte make yow aferd?  
 Have ye no mannes herte, and han a berd?  
 Allas! and conne ye been agast of swevenis?  
 No-thing, God wot, but vanitee, in sweven is.  
 Swevenes engendren of replecciouns,  
 And ofte of fume, and of complecciouns,  
 Whan humours been habundant in a wight.

<sup>19</sup> I dreamed.<sup>20</sup> Dream.<sup>21</sup> Interpret.<sup>22</sup> Trusty.<sup>23</sup> Boaster.

Certes this dreem, which ye han met<sup>24</sup> to-night,  
Cometh of the grete superfluitee.

. . . . .

Lo Catoun, which that was so wys a man,  
Seyde he nat thus, ne do no fors<sup>25</sup> of dremes?  
Now, sire," quod she, "whan we flee fro the bemes,  
For Goddes love, as tak som laxatyf;  
Up peril of my soule, and of my lyf,  
I counseille yow the beste, I wol nat lye,  
That both of colere, and of malencolye  
Ye purge yow; and for ye shul nat tarie,  
Though in this toun is noon apotecarie,  
I shal my-self to herbes techen yow,  
That shul ben for your hele, and for your prow<sup>26</sup>;  
And in our yerd tho herbes shal I fynde,  
The whiche han of here propretee, by kynde,  
To purgen yow binethe, and eek above.  
Forget not this, for Goddes owene love!  
Ye been ful colerik of compleccioun.

. . . . .

A day or two ye shul have digestyves  
Of wormes, er ye take your laxatyves,  
Of lauriol, centaure, and fumetere,  
Or elles of ellebor, that groweth there,  
Of catapuce, or of gaytres beryis,  
Of erbe yve, growing in our yerd, that mery is;  
Pekke hem up right as they growe, and ete hem in.  
Be mery, housbond, for your fader kyn!  
Dredeth no dreem; I can say yow namore."

"Madame," quod he, "*graunt mercy* of your lore.  
But natheles, as touching daun Catoun,  
That hath of wisdom such a gret renoun,  
Though that he bad no dremes for to drede,  
By God, men may in olde bokes rede  
Of many a man, more of auctoritee  
Than evere Catoun was, so moot I thee<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Dreamed.

<sup>25</sup> Profit.

<sup>26</sup> Take no notice.

<sup>27</sup> So may I thrive.

That al the revers seyn of this sentence  
 And han wel founden by experience,  
 That dremes ben significaciouns,  
 As wel of Ioye as tribulaciouns  
 That folk enduren in this lyf present.  
 Ther nedeth make of this noon argument;  
 The verray preve<sup>28</sup> sheweth it in dede.  
 Oon of the grettteste auctours that men rede  
 Seith thus, that whylom two felawes wente  
 On pilgrimage, in a ful good entente;  
 And happed so, thay come into a toun,  
 Wher as ther was swich congregacioun  
 Of peple, and eek so streit<sup>29</sup> of herbergage<sup>30</sup>,  
 That they ne founde as muche as o cotage,  
 In which they bothe mighte y-logged be.  
 Wherfor thay mosten, of necessitee,  
 As for that night, departen compaignye;  
 And ech of hem goth to his hostelrye,  
 And took his logging as it wolde falle.  
 That oon of hem was logged in a stalle,  
 Fer in a yerd, with oxen of the plough;  
 That other man was logged wel y-nough,  
 As was his aventure, or his fortune,  
 That us governeth alle as in commune.  
 And so bifel, that, long er it were day,  
 This man mette in his bed, ther as he lay,  
 How that his felawe gan up-on him calle,  
 And seyde, 'allas! for in an oxes stalle  
 This night I shal be mordred ther I lye.  
 Now help me, dere brother, or I dye;  
 In alle haste com to me,' he sayde.  
 This man out of his sleep for fere abrayde<sup>31</sup>;  
 But whan that he was wakned of his sleep,  
 He turned him, and took of this no keep<sup>32</sup>,  
 Him thoughte his dreem nas but a vanitee.  
 Thus twyes in his sleping dremed he.  
 And atte thridde tyme yet his felawe

<sup>28</sup> Proof.<sup>30</sup> Lodging-places.<sup>31</sup> Started up.<sup>29</sup> Scant.<sup>32</sup> Heed.

Com, as him thoughte, and seide, 'I am now slawe<sup>33</sup>;  
 Bihold my bloody woundes, depe and wyde!  
 Arys up erly in the morwe-tyde,  
 And at the west gate of the toun,' quod he,  
 'A carte ful of donge ther shaltow see,  
 In which my body is hid ful prively;  
 Do thilke carte arresten boldely.  
 My gold caused my mordre, sooth to sayn;'  
 And tolde him every poynt how he was slayn,  
 With a ful pitous face, pale of hewe.  
 And truste wel, his dreem he fond ful trewe;  
 For on the morwe, as sone as it was day,  
 To his felawes in he took the way;  
 And whan that he cam to this oxes stalle,  
 After his felawe he bigan to calle.  
 The hostiler answerde him anon,  
 And seyde, 'sire, your felawe is agon,  
 As sone as day he wente out of the town.'  
 This man gan fallen in suspeciuon,  
 Remembring on his dremes that he mette,  
 And forth he goth, no lenger wolde he lette<sup>34</sup>,  
 Unto the west gate of the toun, and fond  
 A dong-carte, as it were to donge lond,  
 That was arrayed in that same wyse  
 As ye han herd the dede man devyse;  
 And with an hardy herte he gan to crye  
 Vengeaunce and Iustice of this felonye:—  
 'My felawe mordred is this same night,  
 And in this carte he lyth gapinge upright.  
 I crye out on the ministres' quod he,  
 'That sholden kepe and reulen this citee;  
 Harrow! allas! her lyth my felawe slayn!'  
 What sholde I more un-to this tale sayn?  
 The peple out-sterte, and caste the cart to grounde,  
 And in the middel of the dong they founde  
 The dede man, that mordred was al newe.  
 "O blisful God, that art so Iust and trewe!

<sup>33</sup> Slain.<sup>34</sup> Delay.

Lo, how that thou biwrevest<sup>35</sup> mordre alway!  
 Mordre wol out, that se we day by day.  
 Mordre is so wlatom<sup>36</sup> and abhominable  
 To God, that is so Iust and resonable,  
 That he ne wol nat suffre it heled<sup>37</sup> be;  
 Though it abyde a yeer, or two, or three,  
 Mordre wol out, this my conclusioun.  
 And right anoon, ministres of that toun  
 Han hent the carter, and so sore him pyned<sup>38</sup>,  
 And eek the hostiler so sore engyned<sup>39</sup>,  
 That thay biknewe<sup>40</sup> hir wikkednesse anoon,  
 And were an-hanged by the nekke-boon.

“Here may men seen that dremes been to drede.  
 And certes, in the same book I rede,  
 Right in the nexte chapitre after this,  
 (I gabbe<sup>41</sup> nat, so have I Ioye or blis,)  
 Two men that wolde han passed over see,  
 For certeyn cause, in-to a fer contree,  
 If that the wind ne hadde been contrarie,  
 That made hem in a citee for to tarie,  
 That stood ful mery upon an haven-syde.  
 But on a day, agayn the even-tyde,  
 The wind gan chaunge, and blew right as hem leste.  
 Iolif and glad they wente un-to hir reste,  
 And casten hem ful erly for to saille;  
 But to that oo man fel a greet mervaille,  
 That oon of hem, in sleping as he lay,  
 Him mette a wonder dreem, agayn the day;  
 Him thoughte a man stood by his beddes syde,  
 And him comaunded, that he sholde abyde,  
 And seyde him thus, ‘if thou to-morwe wende,  
 Thou shalt be dreynt<sup>42</sup>; my tale is at an ende.’  
 He wook, and tolde his felawe what he mette,  
 And preyde him his viage for to lette;  
 As for that day, he preyde him to abyde.  
 His felawe, that lay by his beddes syde,

<sup>35</sup> Makest known.<sup>36</sup> Tormented.<sup>41</sup> Lie.<sup>36</sup> Hatful.<sup>39</sup> Racked.<sup>37</sup> Hidden.<sup>40</sup> Confessed.<sup>42</sup> Drowned.

Gan for to laughe, and scorned him ful faste.  
 'No dreem,' quod he, 'may so myn herte agaste,  
 That I wol lette for to do my thinges.  
 I sette not a straw by thy dreminges,  
 For swevenes been but vanitees and lapes<sup>43</sup>.  
 Men dreme al-day of owles or of apes,  
 And eek of many a mase therwithal;  
 Men dreme of thing that nevere was ne shal.  
 But sith I see that thou wolt heer abyde,  
 And thus for-sleuthen wilfully thy tyde,  
 God wot it reweth<sup>44</sup> me; and have good day.'  
 And thus he took his leve, and wente his way.  
 But er that he hadde halfe his cours v-seyled,  
 Noot I nat why, ne what mischaunce it eyled<sup>45</sup>,  
 But casuelly the shippes botme rente,  
 And ship and man under the water wente  
 In sighte of othere shippes it byside,  
 That with hem seyled at the same tyde.  
 And therfor, faire Pertelote so dere,  
 By swiche ensamples olde maistow lere,  
 That no man sholde been to recchelees<sup>46</sup>  
 Of dremes, for I sey thee, doutelees,  
 That many a dreem ful sore is for to drede.  
 "Lo, in the lyf of seint Kenelm, I rede,  
 That was Kenulphus sone, the noble king  
 Of Mercenrike, how Kenelm mette a thing;  
 A lyte<sup>47</sup> er he was mordred, on a day,  
 His mordre in his avisioun<sup>48</sup> he say<sup>49</sup>.  
 His norice<sup>50</sup> him expounded every del  
 His swevene, and bad him for to kepe him wel  
 For traisoun; but he nas but seven yeer old,  
 And therefore litel tale hath he told  
 Of any dreem, so holy was his herte.  
 By God, I hadde levere than my sherte  
 That ye had rad his legende, as have I.  
 Dame Pertelote, I sey yow trewely,

<sup>43</sup> Jests.<sup>44</sup> Careless.<sup>45</sup> Saw<sup>46</sup> Grieveth.<sup>47</sup> Little.<sup>48</sup> Ailed it.<sup>49</sup> Vision.<sup>50</sup> Nurse.

Macrobeus, that writ the avisioun  
In Affrike of the worthy Cipiou,  
Affermeth dremes, and seith that they been  
Warning of thinges that men after seen.  
And forther-more, I pray yow loketh wel  
In the olde testament, of Daniel,  
If he held dremes any vanitee.  
Reed eek of Ioseph, and ther shul ye see  
Wher dremes ben somtyme (I sey nat alle)  
Warning of thinges that shul after falle.  
Loke of Egipt the king, daun Pharao,  
His bakere and his boteler also,  
Wher they ne felte noon effect in dremes.  
Who so wol seken actes of sondry remes<sup>51</sup>  
May rede of dremes many a wonder thing.

“Lo Cresus, which that was of Lyde king,  
Mette he nat that he sat upon a tree,  
Which signified he sholde anhangd be?  
Lo heer Andromacha, Ectores wyf,  
That day that Ector sholde lese his lyf,  
She dremed on the same night biforn,  
How that the lyf of Ector sholde be lorn,  
If thilke day he wente in-to bataille;  
She warned him, but it mighte nat availle;  
He wente for to fighte natheles,  
But he was slayn anoon of Achilles.  
But thilke tale is al to long to telle,  
And eek it is ny day, I may nat dwelle.  
Shortly I seye, as for conclusioun,  
That I shal han of this avisioun  
Adversitee; and I seye forther-more,  
That I ne telle of laxatyves no store,  
For they ben venimous, I woot it wel;  
I hem defye, I love hem nevere a del.

“Now let us speke of mirth, and stinte al this;  
Madame Pertelote, so have I blis,  
Of o thing God hath sent me large grace;  
For whan I see the beautee of your face,

<sup>51</sup> Realms.



Ye ben so scarlet-reed about youre yen,  
 It maketh al my drede for to dyen;  
 For, also siker as *In principio*,  
*Mulier est hominis confusio*<sup>52</sup>;  
 Madame, the sentence of this Latin is—  
 Womman is mannes Ioye and al his blis;  
 I am so ful of Ioye and of solas  
 That I defye bothe sweven and dreem.”  
 And with that word he fley doun fro the beem,  
 For it was day, and eek his hennes alle;  
 And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle,  
 For he had founde a corn, lay in the yerd.  
 Roial he was, he was namore aferd;  
 He loketh as it were a grim leoun;  
 And on his toos he rometh up and doun,  
 Him deynd not to sette his foot to grounde.  
 He chukketh, whan he hath a corn y-founde,  
 And to him rennen thanne his wyves alle.  
 Thus roial, as a prince is in his halle,  
 Leve I this Chauntecleer in his pasture;  
 And after wol I telle his aventure.

Whan that the month in which the world bigan,  
 That highte March, whan God first maked man,  
 Was complet, and y-passed were also,  
 Sin March bigan, thritty dayes and two,  
 Bifel that Chauntecleer, in al his pryde,  
 His seven wyves walking by his syde,  
 Caste up his eyen to the brighte sonne,  
 That in the signe of Taurus hadde y-ronne  
 Twenty degrees and oon, and somewhat more;  
 And knew by kynde, and by noon other lore,  
 That it was pryme<sup>53</sup>, and crew with blisful stevene<sup>54</sup>.  
 “The sonne,” he sayde, “is clomben up on hevene  
 Fourty degrees and oon, and more, y-wis.  
 Madame Pertelote, my worldes blis,  
 Herkneth thise blisful briddes how they singe,  
 And see the fresshe floures how they springe;

<sup>52</sup>In the beginning woman is man's destruction.

<sup>53</sup>Nine o'clock.

<sup>54</sup>Voice.

Ful is myn hert of revel and solas.''  
 But sodeinly him fil a sorweful cas<sup>55</sup>,  
 For evere the latter ende of Ioye is wo.  
 God woot that worldly Ioye is sone ago<sup>56</sup>;  
 And if a rethor<sup>57</sup> coude faire endyte,  
 He in a chronique sauffy mighte it write,  
 As for a sovereyn notabilitee.  
 Now every wys man, lat him herkne me;  
 This storie is al-so trewe, I undertake,  
 As is the book of Launcelot de Lake,  
 That wommen holde in ful gret reverence.  
 Now wol I torne agayn to my sentence.

A col fox, ful of sly inquitee,  
 That in the grove hadde woned yeres three,  
 By heigh imaginacioun forn-cast,  
 The same night thurgh-out the hegges<sup>58</sup> brast<sup>59</sup>  
 Into the yerd, ther Chauntecleer the faire  
 Was wont, and eek his wyves, to repaire;  
 And in a bed of wortes<sup>60</sup> stille he lay,  
 Til it was passed undern<sup>61</sup> of the day,  
 Wayting his tyme on Chauntecleer to falle  
 As gladly doon thise homicydes alle,  
 That in awayt liggen<sup>62</sup> to mordre men.

My tale is of a cok, as ye may here,  
 That took his conseil of his wyf, with sorwe,  
 To walken in the yerd upon that morwe  
 That he had met the dreem, that I of tolde.  
 Wommennes counseils been ful ofte colde<sup>63</sup>;  
 Wommannes conseil broghte us first to wo,  
 And made Adam fro paradys to go,  
 Ther as he was ful mery, and wel at ese.  
 But for I noot, to whom it mighte displese,  
 If I conseil of wommen wolde blame,  
 Passe over, for I seyde it in my game.  
 Rede auctours, wher they trete of swich matere,  
 And what thay seyn of wommen ye may here.

<sup>55</sup> Fate.<sup>56</sup> Gone.<sup>57</sup> Rhetorician.<sup>58</sup> Hedges.<sup>59</sup> Burst.<sup>60</sup> Herbs.<sup>61</sup> About eleven a. m.<sup>62</sup> Lie.<sup>63</sup> Baneful.

Thise been the cokkes wordes, and nat myne;  
I can noon harme of no womman divyne.

Faire in the sond, to bathe hire merily,  
Lyth Pertelote, and alle hir sustres by,  
Agayn the sonne; and Chauntecleer so free  
Song merier than the mermayde in the see;  
For Phisiologus seith sikerly,  
How that they singen wel and merily.  
And so bifel, that as he caste his ye<sup>64</sup>,  
Among the wortes, on a boterflye,  
He was war of this fox that lay ful lowe.  
No-thing ne liste him thanne for to crowe,  
But cryde anon, "cok, cok," and up he sterte,  
As man that was affrayed in his herte.  
For naturelly a beest desyreth flee  
Fro his contrarie<sup>65</sup>, if he may it see,  
Though he never erst had seyn it with his ye.

This Chauntecleer, whan he gan him espye,  
He wolde han fled, but that the fox anon  
Seyde, "Gentil sire, allas! wher wol ye gon?  
Be ye affrayed of me that am your freend?  
Now certes, I were worse than a feend,  
If I to yow wolde harm or vileinye.  
I am nat come your counsel for tespye;  
But trewely, the cause of my cominge  
Was only for to herkne how that ye singe.  
For trewely ye have as mery a stevene<sup>66</sup>,  
As eny aungel hath, that is in hevене;  
Therwith ye han in musik more feline  
Than hadde Boece, or any that can singe.  
My lord your fader (God his soule blesse!)  
And eek your moder, of hir gentillesse,  
Han in myn hous y-been, to my gret ese<sup>67</sup>;  
And certes, sire, ful fayn wolde I yow plesse.  
But for men speke of singing, I wol saye,  
So mote I brouke<sup>68</sup> wel myn eyen tweye,  
Save yow, I herde nevere man so singe,

<sup>64</sup> Eyes.

<sup>65</sup> Foe.

<sup>66</sup> Voice.

<sup>67</sup> The fox had eaten them.

<sup>68</sup> Have the use of.

As dide your fader in the morweninge;  
 Certes, it was of herte, al that he song.  
 And for to make his voys the more strong,  
 He wolde so peyne him, that with both his yen  
 He moste winke, so loude he wolde cryen,  
 And stonden on his tiptoon therwithal,  
 And strecche forth his nekke long and smal.  
 And eek he was of swich discrecioun,  
 That ther has no man in no regioun  
 That him in song or wisdom mighte passe.  
 I have weel rad in daun Burnel the Asse,  
 Among his vers, how that ther was a cok,  
 For that a prestes sone yaf him a knok  
 Upon his leg, whyl he was yong and nyce<sup>69</sup>,  
 He made him for to lese his benefyce<sup>70</sup>.  
 But certeyn, ther nis no comparisoun  
 Bitwix the wisdom and discrecioun  
 Of your fader, and of his subtiltee.  
 Now singeth, sire, for seinte charitee,  
 Let se, conne ye your fader countrefete?"  
 This Chauntecleer his winges gan to bete,  
 As man that coude his tresoun nat espye,  
 So was he ravissed with his flaterye.

Allas! ye lordes, many a fals flatour  
 Is in your courtes, and many a losengeour<sup>71</sup>,  
 That plesen yow wel more, by my feith,  
 Than he that soothfastnesse unto yow seith.  
 Redeth Ecclesiaste of flaterye;  
 Beth war, ye lordes, of hir trecherye.

This Chauntecleer stood hye up-on his toos,  
 Strecching his nekke, and held his eyen cloos,  
 And gan to crowe loude for the nones;  
 And daun Russel the foxe sterte up at ones,  
 And by the gargat<sup>72</sup> hente Chauntecleer,  
 And on his bak toward the wode him beer,  
 For yet ne was ther no man that him sewed<sup>73</sup>.

<sup>69</sup> Foolish.

<sup>70</sup> By crowing so late that the youth did not awake in time.

<sup>71</sup> Deceiver.

<sup>72</sup> Throat.

<sup>73</sup> Followed.

O destinee, that mayst nat ben eschewed!  
 Allas, that Chauntecleer fleigh fro the bemes!  
 Allas, his wyf ne roghte<sup>74</sup> nat of dremes!  
 And on a Friday fil al this meschaunce.

. . . . .

Certes, swich cry ne lamentacioun  
 Was nevere of ladies maad, whan Ilioun  
 Was wonne, and Pirrus with his streite<sup>75</sup> swerd,  
 Whan he hadde hent king Priam by the berd,  
 And slayn him (as saith us *Eneydos*),  
 As maden alle the hennes in the clos,  
 Whan they had seyn of Chauntecleer the sighte.  
 But sovereynly dame Pertelote shrighthe<sup>76</sup>,  
 Ful louder than dide Hasdrubales wyf,  
 Whan that hir housbond hadde lost his lyf,  
 And that the Romainys hadde brend Cartage,  
 She was so ful of torment and of rage,  
 That wilfully into the fyr she sterte<sup>77</sup>,  
 And brende hir-selven with a stedfast herte.  
 O woful hennes, right so cryden ye,  
 As, whan that Nero brende the citee  
 Of Rome, cryden senatoures wyves,  
 For that hir housbondes losten alle hir lyves;  
 Withouten gilt this Nero hath hem slayn.  
 Now wol I torne to my tale agayn:

This sely<sup>78</sup> widwe, and eek hir doghtres two,  
 Herden thise hennes crye and maken wo,  
 And out at dores sterten thay anoon,  
 And syen the fox toward the grove goon,  
 And bar upon his bak the cok away;  
 And cryden, "Out! harrow! and weylaway!  
 Ha, ha, the fox!" and after him they ran,  
 And eek with staves many another man;  
 Ran Colle our dogge, and Talbot, and Gerland,  
 And Malkin, with a distaf in hir hand;  
 Ran cow and calf, and eek the verray hogges

<sup>74</sup> Did not care for.<sup>76</sup> Shrieked.<sup>77</sup> Leaped.<sup>78</sup> Drawn.<sup>78</sup> Pious.

So were they fered for berking of the dogges  
 And shouting of the men and wimmen eke,  
 They ronne so, hem thoughte hir herte breke.  
 They yelleden as feendes doon in helle;  
 The dokes cryden as men wolde hem quelle<sup>79</sup>;  
 The gees for fere flowen over the trees;  
 Out of the hyve cam the swarm of bees;  
 So hidous was the noyse, a! *benedicite*<sup>80</sup>!  
 Certes, he lakke Straw<sup>81</sup>, and his meyn<sup>82</sup>,  
 Ne maden nevere shoutes half so shrille,  
 Whan that they wolden any Fleming kille,  
 As thilke day was maad upon the fox.  
 Of bras thay broghten bemes<sup>83</sup> and of box,  
 Of horn, of boon, in whiche they blewe and pouped<sup>84</sup>,  
 And therwithal thay shryked and they houped;  
 It semed as that hevene sholde falle.  
 Now, gode men, I pray yow herkneth alle!

Lo, how fortune turneth sodeinly  
 The hope and pryde eek of hir enemy!  
 This cok, that lay upon the foxes bak,  
 In al his drede, un-to the fox he spak,  
 And seyde, "sire, if that I were as ye,  
 Yet sholde I seyn (as wis God helpe me),  
 Turneth agayn, ye proude cherles alle!  
 A verray pestilence up-on yow falle!  
 Now am I come un-to this wodes syde,  
 Maugree your heed, the cok shal heer abyde;  
 I wol him ete in feith, and that anon."—  
 The fox answerde, "In feith, it shal be don,"—  
 And as he spak that word, al sodeinly  
 This cok brak from his mouth deliverly<sup>85</sup>,  
 And heighe up-on a tree he fleigh anon.  
 And whan the fox saugh that he was y-gon,  
 "Allas!" quod he, "O Chauntecleer, alas!  
 I have to yow," quod he, "y-doon trespas,  
 In-as-muche as I maked yow aferd,

<sup>79</sup> Kill.<sup>80</sup> Bless ye.<sup>81</sup> Jack Straw, leader with Wat Tyler in the Peasants' Revolt in 1381.<sup>82</sup> Followers. <sup>83</sup> Horns. <sup>84</sup> Made a noise with a horn. <sup>85</sup> Quickly.

Whan I yow hente, and broghte out of the yerd;  
 But, sire, I dide it in no wikke<sup>86</sup> entente;  
 Com down, and I shal telle yow what I mente.  
 I shal seye sooth to yow, God help me so."  
 "Nay than," quod he, "I shrewe<sup>87</sup> us bothe two,  
 And first I shrewe my-self, bothe blood and bones,  
 If thou bigyle me ofter than ones.  
 Thou shalt namore, thurgh thy flaterye  
 Do me to singe and winke with myn ye.  
 For he that winketh, whan he sholde see,  
 Al wilfully, God lat him never thee<sup>88</sup>!"  
 "Nay," quod the fox, "but God yive him meschaunce,  
 That is so undiscreet of governaunce,  
 That iangleth<sup>89</sup> whan he sholde holde his pees."  
 Lo, swich it is for to be recchelees,  
 And necligent, and truste on flaterye.  
 But ye that holden this tale a folye,  
 As of a fox, or of a cok and hen,  
 Taketh the moralitee therof, good men.  
 For seint Paul seith, that al that writen is,  
 To our doctryne<sup>90</sup> it is y-write, y-wis.  
 Taketh the fruyt, and lat the chaf be stille.  
 Now, gode God, if that it be thy wille,  
 As seith my lord, so make us alle good men;  
 And bringe us to his heighe blisse. Amen.

<sup>86</sup> Wicked.<sup>89</sup> Chatters.<sup>87</sup> Curse.<sup>88</sup> Prosper.<sup>90</sup> Instruction.

GNARLED SENTINELS



## CHAPTER V

### REACTION AND A NEW PREPARATION

**W**ILLIAM CAXTON. When Chaucer died there was no one to take up the mantle he cast from his shoulders, and literature seemed to be following one of the laws of its own rhythm: after the flow had come the ebb. For a century and a half this period of reaction lasted, though toward the close there were signs of the great awakening which took place in the reign of Elizabeth. The causes of this barren period are to be sought in the repressive action of the Church and of Parliament, in the violent disorders which accompanied the Wars of the Roses and in the general social and commercial interests which attracted and absorbed public attention. However, there were events of literary importance occurring, first and most important of which should be ranked the introduction of printing into England.



About the year 1422 William Caxton was born in Kent, at sixteen years of age was apprenticed to a rich silk merchant, and upon the death of the latter was dispatched to the continent to finish his term. Here he went into business for himself, rose to considerable importance among the merchants of his time, and after engaging in successful political missions entered the household of the Duchess Margaret, wife of Charles the Bold of Burgundy, as an advisor in commercial affairs.

Just where he learned the art of printing is unknown—perhaps at Cologne, in company with his partner. In 1474 he printed his first and second books, the latter being a translation called *The Game and Playe of Chesse*, the first book printed in England. In 1476 he was installed at Westminster, and from his press proceeded more than sixty books, among them being three editions of *The Canterbury Tales*, Gower's *Confessio Amantis* and Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*. He was a hard-working man, who will be remembered by his countrymen for placing their early literary masterpieces within the reach of all who could read and fixing the English language, which was still in a chaotic state. His death occurred in 1491.

II. GOWER. A little older than Chaucer was John Gower, who is supposed to have been born about 1325, but as he lived eight years after Chaucer's death his poetry belongs rather to this later epoch. He was a member of a knightly family, and by his will appears to have pos-

sessed estates of some value. His principal works were the *Speculum Meditantis*, the *Vox Clamantis* and the *Confessio Amantis*. The first, which was written in French, is now lost; the second was in Latin; but the third was in English and was printed by Caxton in 1483. The poem was not original in subject, as the author admits, but consists of a dialogue between a lover and his confessor and becomes a discussion of the morals and metaphysics of love. In general style, it is grave and sententious, and its enormous length makes it tedious, but occasionally there are enlivening stories and episodes drawn from medieval history and romance, especially from the *Gesta Romanorum*. The following *Story of the Caskets* is taken from the fifth book:

In a cronique this I rede:  
Aboute a king, as moste nede  
Ther was of knyghtes and squiers  
Great route, and eke of officers:  
Some of long time him had hadden served,  
And thoughten that they have deserved  
Avancement, and gon withoute:  
And some also ben of the route,  
That comen but awhile agon  
And they advanced were anon.  
These old men, upon this thing,  
So as they durst, agein the king,  
Among hemself<sup>1</sup> compleignen ofte:  
But there is nothing said so softe,  
That it ne comith out at laste:  
The king it wiste, and als so faste,  
As he which was of high prudence:  
He shope therfore an evidence

<sup>1</sup> Themselves.

Of hem<sup>2</sup> that pleignen in the cas,  
 To knowe in whose defalte it was;  
 And all within his owne entent,  
 That non ma wiste what it ment.  
 Anon he let two cofres make  
 Of one semblance, and of one make,  
 So lich<sup>3</sup> that no lif thilke throwe,  
 That one may fro that other knowe:  
 They were into his chamber brought,  
 But no man wot why they be wrought,  
 And natheles the king hath bede  
 That they be set in privy stede,  
 As he that was of wisdom slih;  
 Whan he therto his time sih<sup>4</sup>,  
 All prively, that none it wiste,  
 His owne hondes that one chiste  
 Of fin gold, and of fin perie<sup>5</sup>,  
 The which out of his tresorie  
 Was take, anon he fild full;  
 That other cofre of straw and mull<sup>6</sup>  
 With stones meynd<sup>7</sup> he fild also:  
 Thus be they full bothe two.

So that erliche<sup>8</sup> upon a day  
 He had within, where he lay,  
 Ther should be tofore his bed  
 A bord up set and faire spred:  
 And than he let the cofres fette<sup>9</sup>  
 Upon the bord, and did hem sette.  
 He knewe the names well of tho<sup>10</sup>,  
 The whiche agein him grutched so,  
 Both of his chambre and of his halle,  
 Anon and sent for hem alle;  
 And seide to him in this wise:

There shall no man his hap despise:  
 I wot well ye have longe served,  
 And God wot what ye have deserved;

<sup>2</sup>Them.<sup>3</sup>Like.<sup>4</sup>Saw.<sup>5</sup>Jewels, or precious stones.<sup>6</sup>Rubbish.<sup>7</sup>Mingled.<sup>8</sup>Early.<sup>9</sup>Fetched.<sup>10</sup>Those.

But if it is along on me  
 Of that ye unadvanced be,  
 Or elles if it belong on yow,  
 The sothe shall be proved now:  
 To stoppe with your evil word,  
 Lo! here two cofres on the board;  
 Chese<sup>11</sup> which you list of bothe two;  
 And witeth well that one of tho  
 Is with tresor so full begon,  
 That if ye happe therupon  
 Ye shall be riche men for ever:  
 Now chese, and take which you is lever,  
 But be well ware ere that ye take,  
 For of that one I undertake  
 Ther is no maner good therein,  
 Wherof ye mighten profit winne.  
 Now goth<sup>12</sup> together of one assent,  
 And taketh your avisement;  
 For, but I you this day avance,  
 It stant upon your owne chance,  
 Al only in defalte of grace;  
 So shall be shewed in this place  
 Upon you all well afyn,<sup>13</sup>  
 That no defalte shall be myn.

They knelen all, and with one vois  
 The king they thonken of this chois:  
 And after that they up arise,  
 And gon aside, and hem advise,  
 And at laste they accorde  
 (Wherof her<sup>14</sup> tale to recorde  
 To what issue they be falle)  
 A knyght shall speke for hem alle:  
 He kneleth down unto the king,  
 And seith that they upon this thing,  
 Or for to winne, or for to lese,<sup>15</sup>  
 Ben all avised for to chese.

<sup>11</sup> Choose.<sup>14</sup> Their.<sup>12</sup> Go.<sup>13</sup> At last.<sup>15</sup> Lose.

Tho<sup>16</sup> toke this knyght a yerd<sup>17</sup> on honde,  
 And goth there as the cofres stonde,  
 And with assent of everychone<sup>18</sup>  
 He leith his yerde upon one,  
 And seith<sup>19</sup> the king how thilke same  
 They chese in reguerdon<sup>20</sup> by name,  
 And preith him that they might it have.

The king, which wolde his honor save,  
 When he had heard the common vois,  
 Hath granted hem her owne chois,  
 And toke hem therupon the keie;  
 But for he wolde it were seie<sup>21</sup>  
 What good they have as they suppose,  
 He bade anon the cofre uncloze,  
 Which was fulfild with straw and stones:  
 Thus be they served all at ones.

This king than, in the same stede,  
 Anon that other cofre undede,  
 Wher as they sihen gret richesse,  
 Wel more than they couthen gesse.

Lo! seith the king, now may ye se  
 That ther is no defalte in me;  
 Forthy<sup>22</sup> my self I wol aquite,  
 And bereth ye your owne wite<sup>23</sup>  
 Of that<sup>24</sup> fortune hath you refused.

Thus was this wise king excused:  
 And they lefte off her evil speche,  
 And mercy of her king beseche.

III. MALORY. Of Sir Thomas Malory (Mallore) practically nothing is known with certainty except that his translation of the celebrated Arthurian legends was completed in the ninth year of the reign of Edward IV, about 1470. His manuscript was placed in the hands

<sup>16</sup> Then.

<sup>19</sup> Sayeth to the king.

<sup>22</sup> Therefore.

<sup>17</sup> A rod.

<sup>20</sup> As their reward.

<sup>23</sup> Blame.

<sup>18</sup> Every one.

<sup>21</sup> Seen.

<sup>24</sup> That is, that which.



KING ARTHUR  
BRONZE STATUE IN HOFKIRCHE, INNSBRUCK, TYROL



of William Caxton, who divided it into books and chapters and printed it in 1485. Speaking of his publication of the work, Caxton says:

I, according to my copy, have set it in imprint, to the intent that noble men may see and learn the noble acts of chivalry, the gentle and virtuous deeds that some knights used in those days, by which they came to honor, and how they that were vicious were punished and put off to shame and rebuke: humbly beseeching all noble lords and ladies, with all other estates of what estate or degree they been of, that shall see or read in this said book and work, that they take the good and honest acts in their remembrance, and to follow the same. Wherein they shall find many joyous and pleasant histories, and noble and renowned acts of humanity, gentleness, and chivalry. For herein may be seen noble chivalry, courtesy, humanity, friendliness, hardiness, love, friendship, cowardice, murder, hate, virtue and sin.

The colophon summarizes the contents as follows:

Thus endeth thys noble and joyous book entytled le morte Darthur/Notwythstondyng it treateth of the byrth/lyf/and actes of the sayd kyng Arthur/ of his noble knyghtes of the rounde table/theyr meruayllous enquestes and aduentures/ thachyeuyng of the sangreal/ & in thende the dolorous deth & departyng out of thys world of them al.

The *Morte d'Arthur* is the one brilliant piece of work in the fifteenth century, although it is in no sense original. It is a literary and sentimental prose tale of chivalry, all charming in its simplicity and quaintness. If Malory was not original, he certainly possessed great skill in combining detached romances which he



found in various places and making of them a unified whole which belongs entirely to the Arthurian cycle, calculated in England completely to dispossess the tales of Charlemagne and on the continent to rival them in interest.

The sources from which Malory drew are in the main the French romance of *Merlin*, by Robert de Borron; *La Morte Arthure*, an English metrical romance, the French romance of *Tristan*, and the original English metrical romance, *Le Mort Arthur*.

The vitality of this old romance is sufficiently proved by the number of editions that have been printed, even in modern times, and the avidity with which people of literary taste still read the quaint old tales. Malory, too, has been the source of inspiration for many a modern poet. An example of his style and great command of English may be seen in the following fine extract relating the death of Sir Lancelot:

Then Sir Lancelot, ever after, eat but little meat, nor drank, but continually mourned until he was dead; and then he sickened more and more, and dried and dwindled away. For the bishop, nor none of his fellows, might not make him to eat, and little he drank, that he was soon waxed shorter by a cubit than he was, that the people could not know him. For evermore day and night he prayed (taking no rest), but needfully as nature required: sometimes he slumbered a broken sleep; and always he was lying grovelling upon King Arthur's and Queen Guenever's tomb; and there was no comfort that the bishop, nor Sir Bors, nor none of all his fellows could make him; it availed nothing.

Oh! ye mighty and pompous lords, winning in the glorious transitory of this unstable life, as in reigning over great realms and mighty great countries, fortified with strong castles and towers, edified with many a rich city; yea also, ye fierce and mighty knights, so valiant in adventurous deeds of arms, behold! behold! see how this mighty conqueror, King Arthur, whom in his human life all the world doubted,<sup>1</sup> yea also the noble Queen Guenever, which sometimes sat in her chair adorned with gold, pearls, and precious stones, now lie full low in obscure foss, or pit, covered with clods of earth and clay! Behold also this mighty champion, Sir Lancelot, peerless of all knighthood; see now how he lieth grovelling upon the cold mould; now being so feeble and faint, that sometime was so terrible: how, and in what manner, ought ye to be so desirous of worldly honor so dangerous? Therefore, me thinketh this present book is right necessary often to be read; for in all<sup>2</sup> ye find the most gracious, knightly, and virtuous war, of the most noble knights of the world, whereby they got praising continually; also me seemeth, by the oft reading thereof, ye shall greatly desire to accustom yourselves in following of those gracious knightly deeds; that is to say, to dread God and to love righteousness, faithfully and courageously to serve your sovereign prince; and, the more that God hath given you the triumphal honor, the meeker ought ye to be, ever fearing the unstableness of this deceitful world. . . .

And so, within fifteen days, they came to Joyous Guard, and there they laid his corpse in the body of the quire, and sung and read many psalters and prayers over him and about him; and even his visage was laid open and naked, that all folk might behold him. For such was the custom in those days, that all men of worship should so lie with open visage till that they were buried. And right thus as they were at their service there came Sir Ector de Maris, that had sought seven

<sup>1</sup>Dreaded (held as "redoubtable").

<sup>2</sup>It (?)

years all England, Scotland, and Wales, seeking his brother Sir Lancelot. . . .

And then Sir Ector threw his shield, his sword, and his helm from him; and when he beheld Sir Lancelot's visage, he fell down in a swoon; and, when he awoke, it were hard for any tongue to tell the doleful complaints that he made for his brother. "Ah, Sir Lancelot," said he, "thou wert head of all Christian knights."—"And now, I daresay," said Sir Bors, "that Sir Lancelot, there thou liest, thou wert never matched of none earthly knight's hands. And thou wert the courtliest knight that ever bare shield; and thou wert the truest friend to thy lover that ever bestrode horse; and thou wert the truest lover, of a sinful man, that ever loved woman; and thou wert the kindest man that ever stroke with sword; and thou wert the goodliest person that ever came among press of knights; and thou wert the meekest man, and the gentlest, that ever eat in hall among ladies; and thou wert the sternest knight to thy mortal foe that ever put spear in rest."

How King Arthur took a wife and wedded Guenever, daughter to Leodegrance, King of the land of Cameliard, with whom he had the Round Table, is thus told:

In the beginning of Arthur, after he was chosen King by adventure and by grace, for the most part of the barons knew not that he was Uther Pendragon's son, but as Merlin made it openly known, but yet many kings and lords held great war against him for that cause. But well Arthur overcame them all, for the most part the days of his life he was ruled much by the counsel of Merlin. So it fell on a time King Arthur said unto Merlin, "My barons will let me have no rest, but needs I must take a wife, and I will none take but by thy counsel and by thine advice." "It is well done," said Merlin, "that ye take a wife, for a man of your bounty and noblesse should not be without a wife. Now is there

any that ye love more than another?" "Yea," said King Arthur, "I love Guenever the King's daughter, Leodegrance of the land of Cameliard, the which holdeth in his house the Table Round that ye told he had of my father Uther. And this damosel is the most valiant and fairest lady that I know living, or yet that ever I could find." "Sir," said Merlin, "as of her beauty and fairness she is one of the fairest on live, but, an ye loved her not so well as ye do, I should find you a damosel of beauty and of goodness that should like you and please you, an your heart were not set; but there as a man's heart is set, he will be loth to return." "That is truth," said King Arthur. But Merlin warned the King covertly that Guenever was not wholesome for him to take to wife, for he warned him that Launcelot should love her, and she him again; and so he turned his tale to the adventures of the Sangreal.

Then Merlin desired of the King for to have men with him that should enquire of Guenever, and so the King granted him, and Merlin went forth unto King Leodegrance of Cameliard, and told him of the desire of the King that he would have unto his wife Guenever his daughter. "That is to me," said King Leodegrance, "the best tidings that ever I heard, that so worthy a king of prowess and noblesse will wed my daughter. And as for my lands, I will give him, wist I it might please him, but he hath lands enow, him needeth none, but I shall send him a gift shall please him much more, for I shall give him the Table Round, the which Uther Pendragon gave me, and when it is full complete, there is an hundred knights and fifty. And as for a hundred good knights I have myself, but I fawte fifty, for so many have been slain in my days." And so Leodegrance delivered his daughter Guenever unto Merlin, and the Table Round with the hundred knights, and so they rode freshly, with great royalty, what by water and what by land, till that they came nigh unto London.

When King Arthur heard of the coming of Guenever and the hundred knights with the Table Round, then

King Arthur made great joy for her coming, and that rich present, and said openly, "This fair lady is passing welcome unto me, for I have loved her long, and therefore there is nothing so lief to me. And these knights with the Round Table please me more than right great riches." And in all haste the King let ordain for the marriage and the coronation in the most honorable wise that could be devised.

How Galahad and his fellows were fed of the Holy Sangreal and how Galahad was made King:

So departed Galahad from thence, and rode five days till that he came to the maimed King. And ever followed Percivale the five days, asking where he had been; and so one told him how the adventures of Logris were achieved. So on a day it befell that they came out of a great forest, and there they met at traverse with Sir Bors, the which rode alone. It is none need to tell if they were glad; and them he saluted, and they yielded him honor and good adventure, and every each told other. Then said Bors: "It is more than a year and a half that I ne lay ten times where men dwelled, but in wild forests and in mountains, but God was ever my comfort." Then rode they a great while till that they came to the castle of Carbonek. And when they were entered within the castle King Pelles knew them; then there was great joy, for they wist well by their coming that they had fulfilled the quest of the Sangreal.

Then Eliazar, King Pelles' son, brought to fore them the broken sword wherewith Joseph was stricken through the thigh. Then Bors set his hand thereto, if that he might have soldered it again; but it would not be. Then he took it to Percivale, but he had no more power thereto than he. "Now have ye it again," said Percivale to Galahad, "for an it be ever achieved by any bodily man ye must do it." And then he took the pieces and set them together, and they seemed that they had never been broken, and as well as it had been first forged. And

when they within espied that the adventure of the sword was achieved, then they gave the sword to Bors, for it might not be better set; for he was a good knight and a worthy man.

And a little afore even, the sword arose great and marvelous, and was full of great heat that many men fell for dread. And anon alit a voice among them, and said: "They that ought not to sit at the table of Jesu Christ arise, for now shall very knights be fed." So they went thence, all save King Pelles and Eliazar, his son, the which were holy men, and a maid which was his niece; and so these three fellows and they three were there, no more.

Anon they saw knights all armed come in at the hall door, and did off their helms and their arms, and said unto Galahad: "Sir, we have hied right much for to be with you at this table where the holy meat shall be departed." Then said he: "Ye be welcome, but of whence be ye?" So three of them said they were of Gaul, and other three said they were of Ireland, and the other three said they were of Denmark. So as they sat thus there came out a bed of tree, of a chamber, the which four gentlewomen brought; and in the bed lay a good man sick, and a crown of gold upon his head; and there in the middes of the place they set him down, and went again their way. Then he lift up his head, and said: "Galahad, Knight, ye be welcome, for much have I desired your coming, for in such pain and in such anguish I have been long. But now I trust to God the term is come that my pain shall be allayed, that I shall pass out of this world so as it was promised me long ago."

Therewith a voice said: "There be two among you that be not in the quest of the Sangreal, and therefore depart ye." Then King Pelles and his son departed. And therewithal beseemed them that there came a man, and four angels from heaven, clothed in likeness of a bishop, and had a cross in his hand; and these four angels bare him up in a chair, and set him down before the table of silver whereupon the Sangreal was; and it

seemed that he had in middes of his forehead letters the which said: "See ye here Joseph, the first bishop of Christendom, the same which Our Lord succored in the city of Sarras in the spiritual place." Then the knights marveled, for that bishop was dead more than three hundred years tofore. "O knights," said he, "marvel not, for I was sometime an earthly man."

With that they heard the chamber door open, and there they saw angels; and two bare candles of wax, and the third a towel, and the fourth a spear which bled marvelously, and three drops fell within a box which he held with his other hand. And they set the candles upon the table, and the third the towel upon the vessel, and the fourth the holy spear even upright upon the vessel. And then the bishop made semblant as though he would have gone to the sacring of the mass. And then he took an ubbly which was made in likeness of bread. And at the lifting up there came a figure in likeness of a child, and the visage was as red and as bright as any fire, and smote himself into the bread, so that they all saw it that the bread was formed of a fleshly man; and then he put it into the holy vessel again, and then he did that longed to a priest to do to a mass. And then he went to Galahad and kissed him, and bad him go and kiss his fellows: and so he did anon. "Now," said he, "servants of Jesu Christ, ye shall be fed afore this table with sweetmeats that never knights tasted." And when he had said, he vanished away. And they set them at the table in great dread, and made their prayers.

Then looked they and saw a man come out of the holy vessel, that had all the signs of the passion of Jesu Christ, bleeding all openly, and said: "My knights, and my servants, and my true children, which be come out of deadly life into spiritual life, I will now no longer hide me from you, but ye shall see now a part of my secrets and of my hidden things: now hold and receive the high meat which ye have so much desired." Then took he himself the holy vessel and came to Galahad; and he kneeled down, and there he received his Savior, and

after him so received all his fellows; and they thought it so sweet that it was marvelous to tell.

Then said he to Galahad: "Son, wotest thou what I hold betwixt my hands?" "Nay," said he, "but if ye will tell me." "This is," said he, "the holy dish wherein I ate the lamb on Sher-Thursday. And now hast thou seen that thou most desired to see, but yet hast thou not seen it so openly as thou shalt see it in the city of Sarras in the spiritual place. Therefore thou must go hence and bear with thee this holy vessel; for this night it shall depart from the realm of Logris, that it shall never be seen more here. And wotest thou wherefore? For he is not served nor worshiped to his right by them of this land, for they be turned to evil living; therefore I shall disherit them of the honor which I have done them. And therefore go ye three to-morrow unto the sea, where ye shall find your ship ready, and with you take the sword with the strange girdles, and no more with you but Sir Percivale and Sir Bors. Also I will that ye take with you of the blood of this spear for to anoint the maimed King, both his legs and all his body, and he shall have his health."

"Sir," said Galahad, "why shall not these other fellows go with us?" "For this cause: for right as I departed my apostles one here and another there, so I will that ye depart; and two of you shall die in my service, but one of you shall come again and tell tidings." Then gave he them his blessing and vanished away. And Galahad went anon to the spear which lay upon the table, and touched the blood with his fingers, and came after to the maimed King and anointed his legs. And therewith he clothed him anon, and start upon his feet out of his bed as an whole man, and thanked Our Lord that He had healed him. . . .

Right so departed Galahad, Percivale and Bors with him; and so they rode three days, and then they came to a rivage, and found the ship whereof the tale speaketh of tofore. And when they came to the board they found in the middes the table of silver which they had left with



the maimed King, and the Sangreal which was covered with red samite. Then were they glad to have such things in their fellowship; and so they entered and made great reverence thereto; and Galahad fell in his prayer long time to Our Lord, that at what time he asked, that he should pass out of this world. So much he prayed till a voice said to him: "Galahad, thou shalt have thy request; and when thou askest the death of thy body thou shalt have it, and then shalt thou find the life of the soul."

Percivale heard this, and prayed him, of fellowship that was between them, to tell him wherefore he asked such things. "That shall I tell you," said Galahad; "the other day when we saw a part of the adventures of the Sangreal I was in such a joy of heart, that I trow never man was that was earthly. And therefore I wot well, when my body is dead my soul shall be in great joy to see the blessed Trinity every day, and the Majesty of Our Lord, Jesu Christ." So long were they in the ship that they said to Galahad: "Sir, in this bed ought ye to lie, for so saith the scripture." And so he laid him down and slept a great while; and when he awaked he looked afore him and saw the city of Sarraas.

And as they would have landed they saw the ship wherein Percivale had put his sister in. "Truly," said Percivale, "in the name of God, well hath my sister holden us covenant." Then took they out of the ship the table of silver, and he took it to Percivale and to Bors, to go tofore, and Galahad came behind. And right so they went to the city, and at the gate of the city they saw an old man crooked. Then Galahad called him and bad him help to bear this heavy thing. "Truly," said the old man, "it is ten year ago that I might not go but with crutches." "Care thou not," said Galahad, "and arise up and show thy good will." And so he assayed, and found himself as whole as ever he was. Then ran he to the table, and took one part against Galahad. And anon arose there great noise in the city, that a cripple was made whole by knights marvelous that entered into the

city. Then anon after, the three knights went to the water, and brought up into the palace Percivale's sister, and buried her as richly as a king's daughter ought to be.

And when the King of the city, which was cleped Estorause, saw the fellowship, he asked them of whence they were, and what thing it was that they had brought upon the table of silver. And they told him the truth of the Sangreal, and the power which that God had set there. Then the King was a tyrant, and was come of the line of paynims, and took them and put them in prison in a deep hole. But as soon as they were there Our Lord sent them the Sangreal, through whose grace they were alway fulfilled while that they were in prison.

So at the year's end it befel that this King Estorause lay sick, and felt that he should die. Then he sent for the three knights, and they came afore him; and he cried them mercy of that he had done to them, and they forgave it him goodly; and he died anon. When the King was dead all the city was dismayed, and wist not who might be their King. Right so as they were in counsel there came a voice among them, and bad them choose the youngest knight of them three to be their King: "For he shall well maintain you and all yours." So they made Galahad King by all the assent of the holy city, and else they would have slain him. And when he was come to behold the land, he let make above the table of silver a chest of gold and of precious stones, that hyllid the holy vessel. And every day early the three fellows would come afore it, and make their prayers. Now at the year's end, and the self day after Galahad had borne the crown of gold, he arose up early and his fellows, and came to the palace, and saw tofore them the holy vessel, and a man kneeling on his knees in likeness of a bishop, that had about him a great fellowship of angels as it had been Jesu Christ himself; and then he arose and began a mass of Our Lady. And when he came to the sacrament of the mass, and had done, anon he called Galahad, and said to him: "Come forth, the servant of Jesu Christ, and thou shalt see that thou hast much desired to see."

And then he began to tremble right hard when the deadly flesh began to behold the spiritual things. Then he held up his hands toward heaven and said: "Lord, I thank thee, for now I see that that hath been my desire many a day. Now, blessed Lord, would I not longer live, if it might please thee, Lord."

And therewith the good man took Our Lord's body betwixt his hands, and proffered it to Galahad, and he received it right gladly and meekly. "Now wotest thou what I am?" said the good man. "Nay," said Galahad. "I am Joseph of Aramathie, the which Our Lord hath sent here to thee to bear thee fellowship; and wotest thou wherefore that he hath sent me more than any other? For thou hast resembled me in two things; in that thou hast seen the marvels of the Sangreal, and in that thou hast been a clean maiden, as I have been and am." And when he had said these words Galahad went to Percivale and kissed him, and commended him to God; and so he went to Sir Bors and kissed him, and commended him to God, and said: "Fair lord, salute me to my lord, Sir Launcelot, my father, and as soon as ye see him bid him remember of this unstable world." And therewith he kneeled down tofore the table and made his prayers, and then suddenly his soul departed to Jesu Christ, and a great multitude of angels bare his soul up to heaven, that the two fellows might well behold it. Also the two fellows saw come from heaven an hand, but they saw not the body. And then it came right to the Vessel, and took it and the spear, and so bare it up to heaven. Sithen was there never man so hardy to say that he had seen the Sangreal.

IV. TYNDALE. The date of William Tyndale's birth has not been ascertained, but it is known that he died in 1536. He was a student at Oxford and Cambridge, was ordained priest in 1521, and, having made himself unpopular by heretical views, he left England for the con-

tinent, visited Berlin and Wittenburg, and settled at Cologne, where he completed a translation of the *New Testament*, which probably he had begun before leaving England. His subsequent history was one of laborious translation under severe persecutions, which finally terminated in his arrest at the instance of Henry VIII, a long trial for heresy, and his final martyrdom by being strangled and burned. His last words at the stake were, "Lord, open the eyes of the King of England."

Tyndale's translation of the *Bible* is noted both for its style and accuracy, and indeed, the present authorized, or King James, version, follows it very closely. Dr. Geddes has said: "It is astonishing how little obsolete the language of it is, even at this day; and, in point of perspicuity and noble simplicity, propriety of idiom and purity of style, no English version has yet surpassed it." His translation of the *Magnificat* is as follows:

And Mary sayde: My soule magnifieth the Lorde, and my sprete reioyseth in God my Savioure.

For he hath looked on the povre degre off his honde mayden. Beholde nowe from hens forthe shall all generacions call me blessed.

For he that is myghty hath done to me greate thinges, and blessed ys his name:

And hys mercy is always on them that feare him thorow oute all generacions.

He hath shewed strengthe with his arme; he hath scattered them that are proude in the ymaginacion of their hertes.

He hath putt doune the myghty from their seates, and hath exalted them of lowe degre.

He hath filled the hongry with goode thinges, and hath sent away the ryche empty.

He hath remembred mercy, and hath holpen his serv-aunt Israhel.

Even as he promised to oure fathers, Abraham and to his seed for ever.

V. BALLADS. The greater number of the best and most famous of the old English ballads were written in the period under consideration. These remarkable poems, which originated probably in the brains of the wandering minstrels, were handed down from generation to generation until about this time, when they were put into print. The actual author of none of them is known, and it may be said that they grew into their present form rather than that they were created thus. They are full of the rude life of the times, with the daring and lawlessness, the bravery and passion, all told with a simplicity and directness that cannot be successfully imitated in this more cultivated period.

Among the best of these is the ballad of *Chevy Chase*, which tells with great vigor the story of a battle between Lord Percy of England and Earl Douglas of Scotland. It was of this poem that Sir Philip Sidney said, "I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet." In its oldest form the ballad begins as follows:

The Perse owt off Northombarlande,  
And a vowe to God mayd he,

That he wold hunte in the mountayns  
Off Chyviat within dayes thre,  
In the mauger of doughte Dogles,  
And all that ever with him be.

The oldest manuscript is in the Bodleian Library, from which the following extract telling of the deaths of Douglas and Percy has been somewhat simplified in spelling:

At last the Douglas and the Percy met.  
Like to captains of might and of main;  
They swapt together till they both swat,  
With swords that were of fine Milan.

These worthy freckys for to fight  
Thereto they were full fain,  
Till the blood out of their basnets sprent  
As ever did hail or rain.

“Yield thee, Percy!” said the Douglas,  
“And i’ faith I shall thee bring  
Where thou shalt have an earl’s wages,  
Of Jamie our Scottish king.

“Thou shalt have thy ransom free,  
I hight thee hear this thing;  
For the manfullest man yet art thou  
That ever I conquered in field-fighting.”

“Nay,” said the Lord Percy,  
“I told it thee beforne,  
That I would never yielded be  
To no man of a woman born.”

With that there cam an arrow hastily  
Forth of a mighty wane,  
It hath stricken the Earl Douglas  
In at the breast-bane.

Thorough liver and lungs baith  
The sharp arrow is gane,  
That never after in all his life-days  
He spake no words but ane:  
That was: "Fight ye, my merry men, whiles ye may,  
For my life-days be gane."

The Percy leaned on his brand,  
And saw the Douglas dee;  
He took the dead man be the hand,  
And said: "Wo is me for thee!

"To have saved thy life, I would have parted with  
My lands for years three,  
For a better man of heart nor of hand  
Was not in all the north countrie."

Of all that saw, a Scottish knight,  
Was called Sir Hugh the Montgomery,  
He saw the Douglas to the death was dight,  
He spende a spear, a trusty tree.

He rode upon a courser, through  
A hundred archery,  
He never stinted nor never blame  
Till he came to the good Lord Percy.

He set upon the Lord Percy  
A dint that was full sore,  
With a sure spear of a mighty tree  
Clean thorough the body he Percy bore,

At the other side that a man might see  
A large cloth-yard and mair:  
Two better captains were not in Christiantie  
Than that day slain were there.

Another excellent ballad, supposed to refer  
to an incident that occurred late in the thir-

teenth century to Margaret, daughter of Alexander III, is *Sir Patrick Spens*. Margaret was conveyed with great pomp and ceremony from Scotland to Norway, where she wedded the King. On returning from the nuptial ceremonies, many prominent personages were drowned:

The King sits in Dunfermline town,  
Drinking the blude-red wine;  
“O where shall I get a skeely<sup>1</sup> skipper,  
To sail this ship of mine?”

O up and spake an eldern knight,  
Sat at the King’s right knee—  
“Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor,  
That ever sailed the sea.”

Our King has written a braid letter,  
And sealed it with his hand!  
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,  
Was walking on the strand.

“To Noroway, to Noroway,  
To Noroway o’er the faem;  
The King’s daughter of Noroway,  
’Tis thou maun bring her hame.”

The first word that Sir Patrick read,  
Sae loud loud laughed he;  
The neist word that Sir Patrick read,  
The tear blinded his e’e.

“O wha is this has done this deed,  
And tauld the King o’ me,  
To send me out, at this time of the year,  
To sail upon the sea?

<sup>1</sup> Skillful.



“Be’t wind or wæet, b’t hail or sleet,  
Our ship maun sail the faem;  
The King’s daughter to Noroway,  
’Tis we must fetch her hame.”

They hoysed their sails on Moneday morn,  
Wi’ a’ the speed they may;  
Thay ha’e landed in Noroway,  
Upon a Wodensday.

They hadna been a week, a week,  
In Noroway, but twae,  
When that the lords o’ Noroway  
Began aloud to say—

“Ye Scottishmen spend a’ our King’s goud,  
And a’ our Queenis fee.”  
“Ye lie, ye lie, ye liars loud!  
Fu’ loud I hear ye lie;

“For I ha’e brought as much white monie,  
As gane<sup>2</sup> my men and me,  
And I ha’e brought a half-fou<sup>3</sup> of gude red goud,  
Out o’er the sea wi’ me.

“Make ready, make ready, my merry men a’!  
Our gude ship sails the morn.”  
“Now, ever alake,<sup>4</sup> my master dear,  
I fear a deadly storm!”

“I saw the new moon, late yestreen,  
Wi’ the auld moon in her arm;  
And, if we gan to sea, master,  
I fear we’ll come to harm.”

They hadna sailed a league, a league,  
A league but barely three,

<sup>2</sup>Will suffice for.

<sup>3</sup>Bushel.

<sup>4</sup>Alack.

When the lift<sup>s</sup> grew dark, and the wind blew loud,  
And gurly grew the sea.

The ankers brak, and the top-masts lap,  
It was sic a deadly storm;  
And the waves cam o'er the broken ship,  
Till a' her sides were torn.

"O where will I get a gude sailor,  
To take my helm in hand,  
Till I get up to the tall top-mast,  
To see if I can spy land?"

"O here am I, a sailor gude,  
To take the helm in hand,  
Till you go to the tall top-mast,  
But I fear you'll ne'er spy land."

He hadna gane a step, a step,  
A step but barely ane,  
When a boult flow out of our goodly ship,  
And the salt sea it came in.

"Gae fetch a web o' the silken claith,  
Another o' the twine,  
And wap them into our ship's side,  
And let nae the sea come in."

They fetched a web o' the silken claith,  
Another o' the twine,  
And they wapped them round that gude ship's side,  
But still the sea came in.

O laith, laith, were our gude Scots lords,  
To weet their cork-heeled shoon!  
But lang or a' the play was played,  
They wat their hats aboon.

And mony was the feather-bed,  
That floated on the faem;  
And mony was the gude lord's son,  
That never mair cam hame.

The ladys wrang their fingers white,  
The maidens tore their hair,  
A' for the sake of their true loves—  
For them they'll see nae mair.

O lang, lang may the ladys sit,  
Wi' their fans into their hand,  
Before they see Sir Patrick Spens,  
Come sailing to the strand!

And lang, lang may the maidens sit,  
With their goud kaims in their hair,  
A' waiting for their ain dear loves!  
For them they'll see nae mair.

Half owre, half owre to Aberdour,  
'Tis fifty fathoms deep  
And there lies gude Sir Patrick Spens,  
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet.

*The Nut-brown Maid*, written about 1500, is exceptional in meter and theme and more musical and sonorous than any previous lyric in our language. It is a long and interesting poem, whose object is to prove that the faith of woman is stronger than worldly men believe. The lover puts his sweetheart's affection to a test by pretending to be an outlaw. She accepts the situation calmly, and even when she has learned that he has a mistress already whose servant she must be, the nut-brown maid is still constant. The form is that of a pro-

longed dialogue, in which at the end of each stanza appears a curious refrain. The following stanzas occur after his declaration that as an outlaw he must withdraw to the greenwood:

## SHE

O, Lord, what is this world's bliss,  
That changeth as the moon!  
My summer's day in lusty May  
Is darked before the noon.  
I hear you say, Farewell: Nay, nay,  
We depart not so soon.  
Why say ye so? whither will ye go?  
Alas! what have ye done?  
All my welfare to sorrow and care  
Should change if ye were gone;  
For, in my mind, of all mankind  
I love but you alone.

## HE

I can believe, it shall you grieve,  
And somewhat you distraint:  
But afterward, your paines hard  
Within a day or twain  
Shall soon aslake; and ye shall take  
Comfort to you again.  
Why should ye ought, for to make thought?  
Your labor were in vain.  
And thus I do, and pray to you,  
As heartily as I can;  
For I must to the greenwood go,  
Alone, a banished man.

## SHE

Now sith that ye have showed to me  
The secret of your mind,  
I shall be plain to you again,  
Like as ye shall me find.  
Sith it is so that ye will go,  
I will not live behind;

Shall never be said, the Nut-brown Maid  
Was to her love unkind:  
Make you ready, for so am I,  
Although it were anon,  
For, in my mind, of all mankind  
I love but you alone. . . .

HE

Yet take good heed, for ever I dread  
That ye could not sustain  
The thorny ways, the deep valleys,  
The snow, the frost, the rain;  
The cold, the heat; for dry or wet,  
We must lodge on the plain;  
And, as above, none other roof  
But a brake-bush or twain;  
Which soon should grieve you, I believe;  
And ye would gladly then  
That I had to the greenwood gone  
Alone, a banished man.

The stanzas we quote below give the demonstration of her fidelity after he has spoken of his mistress:

HE

Mine own dear love, I see thee prove  
That ye be kind and true;  
Of maid and wife, in all my life,  
The best that ever I knew.  
Be merry and glad; no more be sad;  
The case is changed now;  
For it were ruth, that, for your truth,  
Ye should have cause to rue.  
Be not dismayed; whatever I said  
To you, when I began;  
I will not to the greenwood go,  
I am no banished man.

SHE

These tidings be more glad to me  
Than to be made a queen,

If I were sure they would endure ;  
 But it is often seen,  
 When men will break promise, they speak  
 The wordes on the spleen.  
 Ye shape some wile me to beguile,  
 And steal from me, I ween :  
 Than were the case worse than it was,  
 And I more woe-begone ;  
 For, in my mind, of all mankind,  
 I love but you alone.

## III

Ye shall not need further to dread :  
 I will not disparage  
 You (God defend !), sith ye descend  
 Of so great a lineage.  
 Now understand ; to Westmoreland,  
 Which is mine heritage,  
 I will you bring ; and with a ring,  
 By way of marriage  
 I will you take, and lady make,  
 As shortly as I can :  
 Thus have ye won an earl's son,  
 And not a banished man.

Many of the best of the ballads are of Scotch origin and exerted a marked influence upon Sir Walter Scott, who collected many of them in his work on the *Minstrelsy of the Border*. James V of Scotland composed several ballads relative to his own wanderings, and the following, *The Gaberlunzie-Man*, is assigned to him by tradition. A gaberlunzie was a traveling beggar, peddler or tinker :

The pawky auld carl came o'er the lea,  
 Wi' mony gude e'ens and days to me,  
 Saying : "Gudewife, for your courtesie,  
 Will ye lodge a silly poor man ?"

The night was cauld, the carl was wat,  
And down ayont the ingle he sat;  
My dochter's shouthers he 'gan to clap,  
And cadgily ranted and sang.

"O wow!" quo' he, "were I as free  
As first whan I saw this countrie,  
How blithe and merry wad I be!  
And I wad never think lang."  
He grew canty, and she grew fain;  
But little did her auld minny ken  
What thir slee twa togidder were sayen,  
When wooing they were sae thrang.

"And O!" quo' he, "and ye were as black  
As ever the crown o' your daddy's hat,  
'Tis I wad lay thee by my back,  
And awa wi' thee I'd gang."  
"And O!" quo' she, "and I were as white  
As e'er the snaw lay on the dike,  
I'd cleid me braw and lady-like,  
And awa wi' thee I'd gang."

Between the twa was made a plot;  
They raise a wee before the cock,  
And wilyly they shot the lock,  
And fast to the bent are they gane.  
Upon the morn the auld wife raise,  
And at her leisure put on her claise,  
Syne to the servants' bed she gaes,  
To speir for the silly poor man.

She gaed to the bed where the beggar lay;  
The strae was cauld—he was away;  
She clapt her hands, cried: "Duleful day!  
For some o' our gear will be gane."  
Some ran to coffer, and some to kist,  
But nought was stown that could be mist;  
She danced her lane, cried: "Praise be blest!  
I have lodged a leal poor man.

“Since nathing’s awa, as we can learn,  
The kirn’s to kirn, and milk to yearn;  
Gae butt the house, lass, and waken my bairn,  
And bid her come quickly ben.”  
The servant gaed where the dochter lay;  
The sheets were cauld—she was away,  
And fast to her gudewife ’gan say:  
“She’s aff wi’ the Gaberlunzie-man!”

“O fie gar ride, and fie gar rin,  
And haste ye find these traitors again!  
For she’s be burnt, and he’s be slain;  
The wearifu’ Gaberlunzie-man.”  
Some rade upo’ horses, some ran a-fit;  
The wife was wud, and out o’ her wit;  
She could na gang, nor yet could she sit,  
But aye did curse and did ban.

Meantime, far hind out owre the lea,  
Fu’ snug in a glen where nane could see,  
Thir twa, wi’ kindly sport and glee,  
Cut frae a new cheese a whang.  
The prieving was good, it pleased them baith;  
To lo’e her for aye he gae her his aith;  
Quo’ she: “To leave thee I will be laith,  
My winsome Gaberlunzie-man.

“O ken’d my minny I were wi’ you,  
Ill-far’dly wad she crook her mou’,  
Sic a puir man she’d never trow,  
After the Gaberlunzie-man.”  
“My dear,” quod he, “ye’re yet owre young,  
An’ hae na learned the beggar’s tongue,  
To fallow me frae town to town,  
And carry the Gaberlunzie on.

“Wi’ kauk and keel I’ll win your bread,  
And spinnels and whorls for them wha need,  
Whilk is a gentle trade indeed,  
To carry the Gaberlunzie on.



I'll bow my leg and crook my knee,  
An' draw a black clout owre my e'e,  
A cripple or blind they will ca' me,  
While we will sing and be merrie."

*The Two Corbies* (crows) is one of the old and popular ballads of Scottish origin:

There were two corbies sat on a tree,  
Large and black as black might be;  
And one the other gan say,  
Where shall we go and dine to-day?  
Shall we go dine by the wild salt sea?  
Shall we go dine 'neath the greenwood tree?

As I sat on the deep sea sand,  
I saw a fair ship nigh at land,  
I waved my wings, I bent my beak,  
The ship sunk, and I heard a shriek;  
There they lie, one, two, and three,  
I shall dine by the wild salt sea.

Come, I will show ye a sweeter sight,  
A lonesome glen, and a new-slain knight;  
His blood yet on the grass is hot,  
His sword half-drawn, his shafts unshot,  
And no one kens that he lies there,  
But his hawk, his hound, and his lady fair.

His hound is to the hunting gane,  
His hawk to fetch the wild fowl hame,  
His lady's away with another mate,  
So we shall make our dinner sweet;  
Our dinner's sure, our feasting free,  
Come, and dine by the greenwood tree.

Ye shalt sit on his white hause-bane,  
I will pick out his bony blue een;  
Ye'll take a tress of his yellow hair,  
To theak yere nest when it grows bare;

The gowden down on his young chin  
Will do to sewe my young ones in.

O, cauld and bare will his bed be,  
When winter storms sing in the tree ;  
At his head a turf, at his feet a stone,  
He will sleep nor hear the maiden's moan ;  
O'er his white bones the birds shall fly,  
The wild deer bound, and foxes cry.

VI. ROBIN HOOD. The ballads tended to center around some legendary or half-mythical character and to form a cycle not unlike in effect that of the Arthurian legends we have previously discussed. Three outlaws, who may possibly have been historical characters, namely, Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough and William of Cloudeslie, form the center of an important cycle of semi-historic value, but the most noteworthy group from a literary point of view is that of Robin Hood and his companions of the greenwood. During this epoch of which we are writing, that is, about 1495, Wynkyn de Worde printed *A Little Geste of Robin Hood*, which may be regarded as the first appearance of the ballad in literary form. There may never have been a Robin Hood, but volumes have been gravely written upon the subject, and some authors are not convinced as yet that he never lived. However that may be, in literature he is a very real character, and stories, poems, dramas and operas have been written about him as a central figure, with incidents drawn almost entirely from the collection of old ballads which formed the cycle

we have mentioned. In all these tales Robin Hood is an outlaw of the most gentlemanly, pious and liberal type, who, with his trained yeomen, dwelt in Sherwood forest, Nottinghamshire, or in Barnsdale in Yorkshire. His life in the woods was charmingly free from care of any sort, for the King's deer which he shot in the woods furnished him with meat, and he took such provisions as he needed from travelers; but neither Robin Hood nor any of his followers molested the poor. In fact, when he was thoroughly convinced that any whom he had robbed needed assistance, he helped them cheerfully and liberally, but from the rich knights and clergy he took without scruple.

Among his followers are many whose names are household words in literature: Little John, Scathlock or Scalock, Will Stutley, Friar Tuck, and Much, the miller's son. When Robin Hood was over eighty years of age, so the legends say, he went to a prioress, a relative of his, to be cured of an illness, and she, persuaded by his enemies, bled him as he requested, but failed to stanch the blood, and he lost his life.

Of the various ballads of the cycle, one of the best is *Robin Hood and the Widow's Three Sons*:

There are twelve months in all the year,  
As I hear many say,  
But the merriest month in all the year  
Is the merry month of May.

Now Robin is to Nottingham gone,  
With a link, a down, and a day,  
And there he met a silly old woman,  
Was weeping on the way.

“What news! what news? thou silly old woman,  
What news hast thou for me?”  
Said she, “There’s three squires in Nottingham town,  
To-day are condemned to die.”

“Oh, what have they done?” said Robin Hood,  
“I pray thee tell to me.”  
“It’s for slaying of the King’s fallow deer,  
Bearing their long bows with thee.”

“Dost thou not mind, old woman,” he said,  
“Since thou made me sup and dine?  
By the truth of my body, ” quoth bold Robin Hood,  
“You could not tell it in better time.”

Now Robin Hood is to Nottingham gone,  
With a link, a down, and a day,  
And there he met with a silly old palmer,  
Was walking along the highway.

“What news? what news? thou silly old man,  
What news, I do thee pray?”  
Said he, “Three squires in Nottingham town,  
Are condemn’d to die this day.”

“Come change thy apparel with me, old man,  
Come change thy apparel for mine;  
Here is forty shillings in good silver,  
Go drink it in beer or wine.”

“Oh, thine apparel is good,” he said,  
“And mine is ragged and torn;  
Wherever you go, wherever you ride,  
Laugh ne’er an old man to scorn.”

"Come change thy apparel with me, old churl,  
Come change thy apparel with mine;  
Here are twenty pieces of good broad gold,  
Go feast thy brethren with wine."

Then he put on the old man's cloak,  
Was patch'd black, blew, and red;  
He thought it no shame, all the day long,  
To wear the bags of bread.

Then he put on the old man's breeks,  
Was patch'd from ballup to side:  
"By the truth of my body," bold Robin can say,  
"This man lov'd little pride."

Then he put on the old man's hose,  
Were patch'd from knee to wrist;  
"By the truth of my body," said bold Robin Hood,  
"I'd laugh if I had any list."

Then he put on the old man's shoes,  
Were patch'd both beneath and aboon;  
Then Robin swore a solemn oath,  
"It's good habit that makes a man."

Now Robin is to Nottingham gone,  
With a link, a down, and a down,  
And there he met with the proud sheriff,  
Was riding along the town.

"Oh, Christ you save, oh, sheriff," he said,  
"Oh, Christ you save and see;  
And what will you give to a silly old man  
To-day will your hangman be?"

"Some suits, some suits," the sheriff he said,  
"Some suits I'll give to thee:  
Some suits, some suits, and pence thirteen,  
To-day's a hangman's fee."

## ROBIN HOOD

Then Robin he turns him round about,  
And jumps from stock to stone :  
"By the truth of my body," the sheriff, he said,  
"That's well jump't, thou nimble old man."

"I was ne'er a hangman in all my life,  
Nor yet intend to trade ;  
But curst be he," said bold Robin,  
"That first a hangman made."

"I've a bag for meal, and a bag for malt,  
And a bag for barley and corn ;  
A bag for bread, and a bag for beef,  
And a bag for my little small horn."

"I have a horn in my pocket,  
I got it from Robin Hood,  
And still when I set it to my mouth,  
For thee it blows little good."

"Oh, wind thy horn, thou proud fellow,  
Of thee I have no doubt :  
I wish that thou give such a blast,  
Till both thy eyes fall out."

The first loud blast that he did blow,  
He blew both loud and shrill ;  
A hundred and fifty of Robin Hood's men  
Came riding over the hill.

The next loud blast that he did give,  
He blew both loud and amain,  
And quickly sixty of Robin Hood's men  
Came shining over the plain.

"On, who are these," the sheriff he said,  
"Come tripping over the lee ?"  
"They're my attendants," brave Robin did say,  
"They'll pay a visit to thee."

They took the gallows from the slack,  
They set it in the glen,  
They hang'd the proud sheriff on that,  
And releas'd their own three men.

Another good tale is that wherein Robin  
Hood plays the harper :

With that came in a wealthy knight,  
Which was both grave and old,  
And after him a finikin lass,  
Did shine like glistering gold.

"This is not a fit match," quod bold Robin Hood,  
"That you do seem to make here,  
For since we are come into the church,  
The bride shall chuse her own dear."

Then Robin Hood put his horn to his mouth,  
And blew blasts two or three ;  
When four and twenty bowmen bold  
Came leaping over the lee.

And when they came into the church-yard,  
Marching all on a row,  
The first man was Allin a Dale,  
To give bold Robin his bow.

"This is thy true love," Robin he said,  
"Young Allin, as I hear say ;  
And you shall be married at this same time,  
Before we depart away."

"That shall not be," the bishop he said,  
"For thy word shall not stand ;  
They shall be three times askt in the church,  
As the law is of our land."

Robin Hood pull'd off the bishop's coat,  
And put it upon Little John :

“By the faith of my body,” then Robin said,  
“This cloth doth make thee a man.”

When Little John went into the quire,  
The people began to laugh;  
He askt them seven times into church,  
Lest three times should not be enough.

“Who gives me this maid?” said Little John.  
Quoth Robin Hood, “That do I;  
And he that takes her from Allin a Dale,  
Full dearly he shall her buy.”

Thus having ended this merry wedding,  
The bride lookt like a queen;  
And so they returned to the merry greenwood,  
Amongst the leaves so green.

VII. SIR THOMAS MORE. A patron of art, an excellent writer and a capable statesman, as well as a genial, friendly human being, Sir Thomas More (1478–1535) was one of the greatest men of pre-Elizabethan times. Born in London, he was educated for the bar, made a name for himself as a lawyer and was elected to Parliament, where he frequently opposed the King. In 1518, however, Henry VIII made him a privy councilor, and two years later he accompanied the King of France, was present at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and a year later was knighted. Subsequently he succeeded Cardinal Wolsey as Lord Chancellor of England, and enjoyed the distinction of being the first layman selected for that office. In spite of his statesmanlike ability, he was considered too conscientious by Henry VIII,



who, when he found More unwilling to deny the supremacy of the Pope, compelled the resignation of his chancellor. Later, when his hostility to the King became greater, More was committed to the Tower, indicted for high treason, and finally executed. His manly demeanor on the scaffold has become historical. The only stains upon the character of Sir Thomas are his bitter persecutions of the Protestants, acts which seem totally at variance with his oft-expressed opinions.

The great work for which More is famous in literature is his *Utopia*, a romance of a land in which all conditions were ideal and everybody lived in happiness and in peace with his neighbors. The imaginary island upon which the republic was located he called *Utopia*, from a Latin word which means *nowhere*. The idea was not original, and his work is but one of a series dealing with similar ideal governments, a series that began with Plato's *Republic*. Written originally in Latin, the *Utopia* was published abroad and did not appear in England until after the death of the author. In fact, it had been translated into most European languages before it appeared in England as translated by Ralph Robinson in 1551. After this date the work became immensely popular and still continues to be read and enjoyed by all interested in governmental science. It is from this romance that the word *utopian* came into common use in our language to apply to any visionary or idealistic scheme.

In this Land of Nowhere everybody is employed in useful labor. No man desires in his clothing any quality except durability, and, as every individual works, six hours a day is sufficient for the community. Neither laziness nor avarice is to be found, for where there is so little toil no one is inclined to be indolent, and where there is plenty of everything, no one is inclined to be greedy. Instead of severe punishment for crime, More would improve the morals and condition by removing temptation:

If you suffer your people to be ill-educated and their manners to be corrupted from their infancy, and then punish them for those crimes to which their first education prepossessed them, what else is to be concluded from this but that you first make thieves and then punish them.

Utopians are never engaged in wars except those that result from a grave injury to themselves or to their allies, and the glory of a general is inversely proportional to the number of enemies whom he slays. The punishment for crime is slavery, since servitude is no less terrible than death, and the public gets the benefit of the labor, while the continual sight of the misery of the criminals is sufficient to deter other people from following their example. No man ought to be punished for his religion:

It being a fundamental opinion among them that a man cannot make himself believe anything he pleases; nor do they drive any to dissemble their thoughts with

threatenings, so that men are not tempted to lie or disguise their opinions among them.

However, every man may try to convert others by reasonable argument and without bitterness, but whosoever adds violence to persuasion is to be condemned to banishment or slavery.

The following extract describes the cities of Utopia:

As for their cities, whoso knoweth one of them, knoweth them all: they be all so like one to another, as farforth as the nature of the place permitteth. I will describe therefore to you one or other of them, for it skilleth not greatly which; but which rather than Amaurote? Of them all this is the worthiest and of most dignity. For the residue 'knowledge it for the head city, because there is the Council-house. Nor to me any of them all is better beloved, as wherein I lived five whole years together.

The city of Amaurote standeth upon the side of a low hill, in fashion almost four square. For the breadth of it beginneth a little beneath the top of the hill, and still continueth by the space of two miles, until it come to the river of Anyder. The length of it, which lieth by the river's side, is somewhat more.

The river of Anyder riseth four and twenty miles above Amaurote out of a little spring. But being increased by other small rivers and brooks that run into it, and, among other, two somewhat big ones, before the city it is half a mile broad, and farther, broader. And forty miles beyond the city it falleth into the ocean sea. By all that space that lieth between the sea and the city, and certain miles also above the city, the water ebbeth and floweth six hours together with a swift tide. When the sea floweth in, for the length of thirty miles it filleth all the Anyder with salt water, and driveth back the fresh water of the river. And somewhat further it changeth the sweetness of the fresh water with saltness.

But a little beyond that the river waxeth sweet, and runneth forby the city fresh and pleasant. And when the sea ebbeth and goeth back again, the fresh water followeth it almost even to the very fall into the sea. There goeth a bridge over the river made not of piles or of timber, but of stonework, with gorgeous and substantial arches at that part of the city that is farthest from the sea; to the intent that ships may pass along forby all the side of the city without let.

They have also another river, which indeed is not very great. But it runneth gently and pleasantly. For it riseth even out of the same hill that the city standeth upon, and runneth down a slope through the midst of the city into Anyder. And because it riseth a little without the city, the Amaurotians have enclosed the head spring of it with strong fences and bulwarks, and so have joined it to the city. This is done to the intent that the water should not be stopped, nor turned away, or poisoned, if their enemies should chance to come upon them. From thence the water is derived and conveyed down in canals of brick divers ways into the lower parts of the city. Where that cannot be done, by reason that the place will not suffer it, there they gather the rain-water in great cisterns, which doth them as good service.

The city is compassed about with a high and thick stone wall full of turrets and bulwarks. A dry ditch, but deep, and broad, and overgrown with bushes, briers, and thorns, goeth about three sides or quarters of the city. To the fourth side the river itself serveth for a ditch.

The streets be appointed and set forth very commodious and handsome, both for carriage, and also against the winds. The houses be of fair and gorgeous building, and on the street side they stand joined together in a long row through the whole street without any partition or separation. The streets be twenty foot broad. On the back side of the houses, through the whole length of the street, lie large gardens, inclosed round about with

the back part of the streets. Every house hath two doors, one into the street, and a postern door on the back side into the garden. These doors be made with two leaves, never locked nor bolted, so easy to be opened that they will follow the least drawing of a finger, and shut again alone. Whoso will, may go in, for there is nothing within the houses that is private, or any man's own. And every tenth year they change their houses by lot.

They set great store by their gardens. In them they have vineyards, all manner of fruit, herbs, and flowers, so pleasant, so well furnished, and so finely kept, that I never saw thing more fruitful, nor better trimmed in any place. Their study and diligence herein cometh not only of pleasure, but also of a certain strife and contention that is between street and street, concerning the trimming, husbanding, and furnishing of their gardens—every man for his own part. And verily you shall not lightly find in all the city anything that is more commodious, either for the profit of the citizens, or for pleasure. And therefore it may seem that the first founder of the city minded nothing so much as these gardens.

For they say that King Utopus himself, even at the first beginning, appointed and drew forth the platform of the city into this fashion and figure that it hath now, but the gallant garnishing, and the beautiful setting forth of it, whereunto he saw that one man's age would not suffice, that he left to his posterity. For their chronicles, which they keep written with all diligent circumspection, containing the history of one thousand seven hundred and sixty years, even from the first conquest of the island, record and witness that the houses in the beginning were very low, and, like homely cottages or poor shepherd houses, made at all adventures of every rude piece of timber that came first to hand, with mud walls, and ridged roofs, thatched over with straw. But now the houses be curiously builded after a gorgeous and gallant sort, with three stories one over another. The

outsides of the walls be made either of hard flint, or of plaster, or else of brick, and the inner sides be well strengthened with timber-work. The roofs be plain and flat, covered with a certain kind of plaster that is of no cost, and yet so tempered that no fire can hurt or perish it, and withstandeth the violence of the weather better than any lead. They keep the wind out of their windows with glass, for it is there much used, and somewhere also with fine linen cloth dipped in oil or amber, and that for two commodities. For by this means more light cometh in, and the wind is better kept out.

Sir Thomas More left also an unfinished biography of Richard III, which may have been a translation from another author. The character of Richard is shown in the following extract:

Richarde, the thirde sonne of Richarde, Duke of York, was in witte and courage egall with his two brothers, in bodye and prowesse farre vnder them bothe, little of stature, ill fetured of limmes, croke backed, his left shoulder much higher than his right, hard fauoured of visage, and such as is in states called warlye, in other menne otherwise, he was malicious, wrathfull, enuious, and from afore his birth euer frowarde. . . . None euill captaine was hee in the warre, as to whiche his disposicion was more metely then for peace. Sundrye victories hadde hee, and sometime ouerthrowes, but neuer in defaulte as for his owne parsones, either of hardinesse or polytike order, free was hee called of dyspence, and somnewhat aboue hys power liberall, with large giftes hee get him vnstedfaste frendeshippe, for whiche hee was fain to pil and spoyle in other places. and get him stedfast hatred. Hee was close and secrete, a deepe dissimuler, lowlye of counteynaunce, arrogant of heart, outwardly coumpinable where he inwardely hated, not letting to kisse whome hee thoughte to kyll: dispitious and cruell, not for euill will alway, but after

for ambicion, and either for the suretie or encrease of his estate. Frende and foo was muche what indifferent, where his aduantage grew, he spared no mans deathe, whose life withstooode his purpose. He slewe with his owne handes King Henry the sixt, being prisoner in the Tower, as menne constantly saye, and that without commaundement or knoweledge of the King, whiche woulde vndoubtedly yf he had entended that thinge, haue appointed that boocherly office, to some other then his owne borne brother.

Once, while Sir Thomas More was away from home, he heard that his barns and those of some of his neighbors had been burned. Accordingly, he wrote to his wife the consolatory letter which appears below in somewhat modernized spelling:

Mistress Alice, in my most heartywise I recommend me to you. And whereas I am informed by my son Heron of the loss of our barns and our neighbors' also, with all the corn that was therein; albeit (saving God's pleasure) it is great pity of so much good corn lost, ye sith it hath liked him to send us such a chance, we must and are bounden, not only to be content, but also to be glad of his visitation. He sent us all that we have lost; and sith he hath by such a chance taken it away again, his pleasure be fulfilled! Let us never grudge thereat, but take it in good worth, and heartily thank him, as well for adversity as for prosperity. And peradventure we have more cause to thank him for our loss than for our winning, for his wisdom better seeth what is good for us than we do ourselves. Therefore, I pray you be of good cheer, and take all the household with you to church, and there thank God, both for that he has given us, and for that he has taken from us, and for that he hath left us; which, if it please him, he can increase when he will. And if it please him to leave us yet less, at his pleasure be it!

I pray you to make some good ensearch what my poor neighbors have lost, and bid them take no thought therefore; for, if I should not leave myself a spoon, there shall no poor neighbor of mine bear no loss by any chance happened in my house. I pray you be, with my children and your household, merry in God; and devise somewhat with your friends what way were best to take, for provision to be made for corn for our household, and for seed this year coming, if we think it good that we keep the ground still in our hands. And whether we think it good that we so shall do or not, yet I think it were not best suddenly thus to leave it all up, and to put away our folk off our farm, till we have somewhat advised us thereon. Howbeit, if we have more now than ye shall need, and which can get them other masters, ye may then discharge us of them. But I would not that any man were suddenly sent away, he wot not whither.

At my coming hither, I perceived none other but that I should tarry still with the King's grace. But now I shall, I think, because of this chance, get leave this next week to come home and see you, and then shall we further devise together upon all things, what order shall be best to take.

And thus as heartily fare you well, with all our children, as ye can wish. At Woodstock, the third day of September [1528], by the hand of your loving husband,  
THOMAS MORE, *Knight*.

VIII. SKELTON. John Skelton was born probably in Norfolk about 1460 and became a noted scholar at Oxford. As one of Henry VIII's early tutors, he was rewarded with the Church living of Diss in Norfolk. Beginning to write poetry, he lampooned Cardinal Wolsey and others to such an extent that he was finally forced to seek sanctuary in Westminster, where he died in 1529. Such in brief is the biography of one of the most original poets



of this epoch. His ability to throw aside the traditions of poesy and strike out on a new line of his own might have raised him much higher as a poet if he had preserved his dignity and had not been so given to scurrilous and abusive writings. However, in the short, snappy meter that he affected, he left some things that are still of interest and that furnished ideas for later writers. One of his best productions, in which he shows gleams of bright fancy and snatches of pleasant description, is his *Book of Philip Sparrowe*, the lament of a nun for the death of her pet sparrow killed by a cat. The curse pronounced upon Philip's murderer is long and furious, as the following fragment will show :

Of Inde the greedy grypes  
Might tear out all thy tripes!  
Of Arcady the bears  
Might pluck away thine ears!  
The wild wolf Lycaon  
Bite asunder thy back bone!  
Of Etna the burning hill  
That day and night burneth still,  
Set in thy tail a blaze,  
That all the world may gaze  
And wonder upon thee,  
From Ocean the great sea  
Unto the Isle of Orcady,  
From Tilbury ferry  
To the plain of Salisbury!  
So traitorously my bird to kill  
That never wrought thee evil will!

*The Garland of Laurel* is one of his more entertaining poems. In this the author goes

to sleep under an oak and in his dream overhears an argument between the Goddess Pallas and the Queen of Fame as to whether Skelton shall have a place in the temple of the latter. All the great poets of the world come in to decide the matter. Finally Skelton is admitted to the temple on an equality with Gower, Chaucer and Lidgate, and thereupon is requested to praise a bevy of fair ladies who are attendants upon the Countess of Surrey. Some of the verses are very clever, as, for instance, the following lines addressed to Mistress Margaret Hussey:

Merry Margaret,  
As midsummer flower,  
Gentle as falcon,  
Or hawk of the tower;  
With solace and gladness,  
Much mirth and no madness,  
All good and no badness;  
So joyously,  
So maidenly,  
So womanly,  
Her demeaning,  
In everything,  
Far, far passing  
That I can indite,  
Or suffice to write,  
Of Merry Margaret,  
As midsummer flower,  
Gentle as falcon,  
Or hawk of the tower;  
As patient and as still,  
And as full of good will,  
As fair Isiphil,  
Coliander,

Sweet Pomander,  
Good Cassander;  
Steadfast of thought,  
Well made, well wrought,  
Far may be sought,  
Ere you can find  
So courteous, so kind,  
As Merry Margaret,  
This midsummer flower,  
Gentle as falcon,  
Or hawk of the tower.

From his attack upon Wolsey the following lines are taken:

But this mad Amalek  
Like to a Mamalek,  
He regardeth lords  
No more than potshords;  
He is in such elation  
Of his exaltation,  
And the supportation  
Of our sovereign lord,  
That, God to record,  
He ruleth all at will,  
Without reason or skill;  
Howbeit the primordial  
Of his wretched original,  
And his base progeny,  
And his greasy genealogy,  
He came of the sank royal  
That was cast out of a butcher's stall.

He would dry up the streams  
Of nine kings' reams,  
All rivers and wells,  
All water that swells;  
For with us he so mells  
That within England dwells,  
I wold he were somewhere else;

For else by and by  
He will drink us so dry,  
And suck us so nigh,  
That men shall scanty  
Have penny or halfpenny.  
God save his noble grave,  
And grant him a place  
Endless to dwell  
With the devil of hell!  
For, an he were there,  
We need never fear  
Of the feindes blake;  
For I undertake  
He wold so brag and crake,  
That he wold than make  
The devils to quake,  
To shudder and to shake,  
Like a fire-drake,  
And with a coal rake,  
Bruise them on a brake,  
And bind them to a stake,  
And set hell on fire  
At his own desire.  
He is such a grim sire,  
And such a potestolate,  
And such a potestate,  
That he wold brake the brains  
Of Lucifer in his chains,  
And rule them each one  
In Lucifer's trone.

The following lines from his *Colin Clout* show how his satirical lines flow on, perilously near doggerel:

Thus I, Colin Clout,  
As I go about,  
And wandering as I walk,  
I hear the people talk:  
Men say for silver and gold

Mitres art bought and sold.  
There shall no clergy oppose  
A mitre nor a croze,  
But a full purse—  
A straw for God's curse!  
What are they the worse?  
For a simoniac  
Is but a hermoniac,  
And no more ye may make  
Of simony, men say,  
But a child's play;  
Over this the aforesaid lay  
Report how the pope may  
A holy anchorite call  
Out of the stony wall,  
And him a bishop make,  
If he on him dare take  
To keep so hard a rule  
To ride upon a mule,  
With gold all be-trapped,  
In purple and pall be-lapped,  
Some hatted and some capped,  
Richly be-wrapped  
(God wot to their great pains)  
In rochets of fine reins,  
White as morrow's milk  
Their taberts of fine silk,  
Their stirrups of mixed gold begared,  
There may no cost be spared.  
Their moils gold doth eat.  
Their neighbors die for meat—  
What care they though Gill sweat,  
Or Jack of the Noke?  
The poor people they yoke  
With summons and citations  
And excommunications,  
About churches and market:  
The bishop on his carpet  
Full soft doth sit—

This is a fearful fit  
To hear the people jangle;  
How warily they wrangle!

IX. SIR THOMAS WYATT. Two poets of greater distinction than Skelton, however, wrote in this pre-Elizabethan time, namely, Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey. Sir Henry Wyatt stood high in the favor of Henry VIII and was able to send his son Thomas to Cambridge and later to open for him a career at court. In 1520 Sir Thomas was married to Elizabeth Brooke, the daughter of Lord Cobham, but previously he had been the lover of Anne Boleyn and continued his intimacy with her until the time of her death. When she was sought by the King, Wyatt tried to dissuade him on the ground that her character was not above reproach, and later the scandal aroused by her threatened to overthrow Wyatt himself; but by some means he reinstated himself in the favor of the King and rose to even higher position than before. His distinction in literature is that of having introduced the sonnet into English verse, although he did not show the genius of Shakespeare in adapting the Italian scheme, nor write as feelingly as his pupil, the Earl of Surrey. The best of Wyatt's poems are his love lyrics, most of which, it is assumed, were addressed to Anne Boleyn. Some of the poems are overstrained and on what appear to us ridiculous subjects, as, for instance, *The Lover Compareth His Heart to an Overcharged Gun*,

and *On My Love, From Whom He Had Her Gloves*, or *On My Love, That Pricked Her Finger with a Needle*. The verses of the last title are as follows:

She sat and sewed, that hath done me the wrong  
Whereof I plain, and have done many a day;  
And whilst she heard my plaint in piteous song,  
She wished my heart the sampler, that it lay.  
The blind master whom I have served so long,  
Grudging to hear that he did hear her say,  
Made her own weapon do her finger bleed,  
To feel if pricking were so good indeed!

But in some of his longer poems there are musical stanzas full of poetic feeling, as, for instance:

As cruel waves full oft be found  
Against the rocks to roar and cry,  
So doth my heart full oft rebound  
Against my breast full bitterly.

And as the spider draws her line,  
With labor lost I frame my suit;  
The fault is hers, the loss is mine:  
Of ill-sown seed such is the fruit.

I fall and see mine own decay,  
As he that bears flame in his breast,  
Forgets for pain to cut away  
The thing that breedeth his unrest.

The following lyric is one of the most beautiful:

My lute, awake! perform the last  
Labor that thou and I shall waste,  
And end that I have now begun;  
For when this song is sung and past,  
My lute, be still, for I have done.

As to be heard where ear is none,  
As lead to grave in marble stone,  
My song may pierce her heart as soon:  
Should we then sing, or sigh, or moan?  
No, no, my lute! for I have done.

The rock doth not so cruelly  
Repulse the waves continually,  
As she my suit and affection;  
So that I am past remedy,  
Whereby my lute and I have done.

Proud of the spoil that thou hast got  
Of simple heart, thorough Love's shot,  
By whom, unkind, thou hast them won,  
Think not he hath his bow forgot,  
Although my lute and I have done.

Vengeance shall fall on thy disdain,  
Thou mak'st but game of earnest pain:  
Trow not alone under the sun  
Unquit to cause thy lover's pain,  
Although my lute and I have done.

May chance thee lie withered and old  
The winter nights that are so cold,  
Plaining in vain unto the moon:  
Thy wishes then dare not be told:  
Care then who list, for I have done.

And then may chance thee to repent  
The time that thou hast lost and spent,  
To cause thy lovers' sigh and swoon:  
Then shalt thou know beauty but lent,  
And wish and want as I have done.

Now cease, my lute! this is the last  
Labor that thou and I shall waste,  
And ended is that I begun;  
Now is this song both sung and past;  
My lute! be still, for I have done.



In conclusion, we quote the little lyric, *To My Beloved*:

Forget not yet the tried intent  
Of such a truth as I have meant;  
My great travail so gladly spent,  
Forget not yet!

Forget not yet when first began  
The weary life, ye know since whan,  
The suit, the service, none tell can;  
Forget not yet!

Forget not yet the great assays,  
The cruel wrong, the scornful ways,  
The painful patience in delays,  
Forget not yet!

Forget not!—Oh! forget not this,  
How long ago hath been, and is  
The mind that never meant amiss,  
Forget not yet!

X. THE EARL OF SURREY. Henry Howard, who was born about 1517, distinguished himself as a soldier in continental campaigns. Rapidly rising to distinction, his influence at court became powerful, but at the death of his friend and companion, the Duke of Richmond, Henry VIII's natural son, Howard fell into disgrace with the King and for some trivial offense was arrested and in 1547 beheaded to satisfy the hatred of the King. There appears to have been no justification for this murder, as everything indicates that the Duke was a man of high character, a patriot and a gentleman, in every sense of the term.

His fame is now, however, greater as a poet than as a soldier, for he was a writer of originality who introduced new measures into English poetry as the medium for fine sentiment and polished grace. Some of his amatory verses, which he addresses to the Fair Geraldine, are beautiful indeed, but, as the object of his passion, Geraldine Fitzgerald, was only thirteen years old, it is fair to assume that he used her name merely as a personification of his ideals. One of these lyrics, in fact, is addressed to her in the character of a disappointed and saddened woman:

O happy dames, that may embrace  
The fruit of your delight,  
Help to bewail the woful case  
And eke the heavy plight  
Of me, that wonted to rejoice  
The fortune of my pleasant choice:  
Good ladies, help to fill my mourning voice.

In ship, freight with remembrance  
Of thoughts and pleasures past,  
He sails that hath in governance  
My life while it will last:  
With scalding sighs, for lack of gale,  
Furthering his hope, that is his sail,  
Toward me, the sweet port of his avail.

Alas! how oft in dreams I see  
Those eyes that were my food;  
Which sometime so delighted me  
That yet they do me good;  
Wherewith I wake with his return  
Whose absent flame did make me burn:  
But when I find the lack, Lord! how I mourn!

When other lovers in arms across  
Rejoice their chief delight,  
Drowned in tears, to mourn my loss  
I stand the bitter night  
In my window where I may see  
Before the winds how the clouds flee:  
Lo! what a mariner love hath made me!

And in green waves when the salt flood  
Doth rise by rage of wind,  
A thousand fancies in that mood  
Assail my restless mind.  
Alas! now drowneth my sweet foe,  
That with the spoil of my heart did go,  
And left me; but alas! why did he so?

And when the seas wax calm again  
To chase fro me annoy,  
My doubtful hope doth cause me pain,  
So dread cuts off my joy.  
Thus is my wealth mingled with woe,  
And of each thought a doubt doth grow;  
—Now he comes. Will he come? Alas! no, no.

In another he praises his little lady and reproves those that compare their favorites with his:

Give place, ye lovers, here before  
That spent your boasts and brags in vain,  
My lady's beauty passeth more  
The best of yours, I dare well sayn,  
Than doth the sun the candle light,  
Or brightest day the darkest night.

And thereto hath a troth as just  
As had Penelope the fair,  
For what she says ye may it trust  
As it by writing sealed were;  
And virtues hath she many moe  
Than I with pen have skill to show.

I could rehearse, if that I would  
The whole effect of Nature's plaint,  
When she had lost the perfect mold  
The like to whom she could not paint:  
With wringing hands how she did cry!  
And what she said, I know it, I.

I know she swore with raging mind;  
Her kingdom only set apart;  
There was no loss by law of kind  
That could have gone so near her heart.  
And this was chiefly all her pain,  
She could not make the like again.

Since Nature thus gave her the praise  
To be the chiefest work she wrought,  
In faith, we think some better ways  
On your behalf, might well be sought  
Than to compare, as ye have done—  
To match the candle with the sun.

While a prisoner in Windsor Castle, the Earl of Surrey thus reflects on his past happiness:

So cruel prison how could betide, alas!  
As proud Windsor? Where I in lust and joy,  
With a king's son, my childish years did pass,  
In greater feast than Priam's sons of Troy;  
Where each sweet place returns a taste full sour.  
The large green courts, where we were wont to hove,  
With eyes upcast unto the maiden's tower,  
And easy sighs, such as folk draw in love.  
The stately seats, the ladies bright of hue,  
The dances short, long tales of great delight;  
With words and looks that tigers could but rue,  
When each of us did plead the other's right.  
The palm play, where desported for the game,  
With dazed eyes oft we, by gleams of love.  
Have miss'd the ball, and got sight of our dame,

To bait her eyes, which kept the leads above.  
The gravel'd ground, with sleeves tied on the helm,  
On foaming horse with swords and friendly hearts;  
With cheer as though one should another whelm,  
Where we have fought, and chased oft with darts.  
With silver drops the meads yet spread for ruth;  
In active games of nimbleness and strength,  
Where we did strain, trained with swarms of youth,  
Our tender limbs that yet shot up in length.  
The secret groves, which oft we made resound  
Of pleasant plaint, and of our ladies praise;  
Recording soft what grace each one had found,  
What hope of speed, what dread of long delays.  
The wild forest, the clothed holts with green;  
With reins avail'd, and swift ybreathed horse,  
With cry of hounds, and merry blasts between,  
Where we did chase the fearful hart of force.  
The void walls eke that harbor'd us each night:  
Wherewith, alas! revive within my breast  
The sweet accord, such sleeps as yet delight;  
The pleasant dreams, the quiet bed of rest;  
The secret thoughts, imparted with such trust;  
The wanton talk, the divers change of play;  
The friendship sworn, each promise kept so just,  
Wherewith we past the winter nights away,  
And with this thought the blood forsakes the face;  
The tears berain my cheeks of deadly hue:  
The which, as soon as sobbing sighs, alas!  
Upsupped have, thus I my plaint renew:  
O place of bliss! renewer of my woes!  
Give me account, where is my noble fere?  
Whom in thy walls thou didst each night enclose;  
To other lief: but unto me most dear.  
Echo, alas! that doth my sorrow rue,  
Returns thereto a hollow sound of plaint.  
Thus I alone, where all my freedom grew,  
In prison pine, with bondage and restraint:  
And with remembrance of the greater grief,  
To banish the less, I find my chief relief.

That Surrey's genius had in it something in common with Shakespeare and that he was a fair precursor of the great sonneteer may be seen by the following beautiful lines composed on the death of Howard's faithful retainer, John Clere:

Norfolke sprung thee, Lambeth holds thee dead,  
 Clere of the County of de Cleremont hight:  
 Within the womb of Ormond's race thou'rt bred,  
 And saw'st thy cousin<sup>1</sup> crowned in thy sight.  
 Shelton for love, Surrey for lord thou chase:  
 (Ay me! while life did last that league was tender)  
 Tracing whose steps thou sawest Kelsal blaze,  
 Landrecy burnt and battered Boulogne render,  
 At Montreuil gates, hopeless of all recure,  
 Thine Earl, half dead, gave in thine hand his will;  
 Which cause did thee this pining death procure,  
 Ere summers four times seven thou could'st fulfill.  
 Ah, Clere, if love had bootied, care, or cost,  
 Heaven had not won, nor earth so timely lost.

XI. ASCHAM. Of Wyclif, Sir Thomas More and other reformers we have already learned, but we cannot close the chapter without allusion to Sir Roger Ascham (1515-1568), the scholarly tutor of the Princess Elizabeth. He was an ardent champion of English against Latin and himself a master of English prose style.

*Toxophilus*, a practical treatise on archery, particularly valuable at the time it was printed, and *The Schoolmaster*, published in 1570, are the two works upon which Ascham's literary reputation rests. The form of the *Toxophilus*

<sup>1</sup> Anne Boleyn.

is that of a dialogue, without the poetical charm and the high sense of humor which enlivens Izaak Walton's famous book, yet it may well have served as a model to the later writer.

*The Scholemaster, Or plaine and perfite way of teachyng children, to understand, write, and speake, the Latin tong, but specially purposed for the priuate brynging up of youth in Ientlemen and Noble mens houses, and commodious also for all such, as haue forgot the Latin tonge, and would, by themselves, without a Scholemaster, in short tyme, and with small paines, recouer a sufficient habilitie, to understand, write, and speake Latin* is an excellent treatise, valuable even at the present time. It protests against the learning of rules in grammar and would substitute in their place practice in translation and writing, in which, as in other instances, *The Schoolmaster's* principles have met with general acceptance. In fact, the idea of education itself, namely, school learning combined with culture of mind and body, is not at all behind our present concepts. Curiously enough, Ascham criticizes sharply the writing of verse and objects to the introduction of Italian forms, devoted as he was to the study of the classics.

The preface to *The Schoolmaster*, which, it will be noticed, was not published until after Ascham's death, gives us a little peep behind the scenes and some notion of the times of the great Elizabeth. After saying that when the great plague was in London in 1563 and Queen

Elizabeth was at her castle of Windsor, it happened that on the tenth of December he, with a number of other gentlemen of importance, dined with Sir William Cecil, principal secretary to her Highness, the Queen. The most of the guests were members of the Privy Council, and Ascham rejoices to remember that it was his good fortune to be there at that time in the company of so many wise and good men together "as hardly then could have been picked out again out of all England beside." He then proceeds as follows:

Mr. Secretary hath this accustomed manner: though his head be never so full of most weighty affairs of the realm, yet at dinner time he doth seem to lay them always aside, and findeth ever fit occasion to talk pleasantly of other matters, but most gladly of some matter of learning; wherein he will courteously hear the mind of the meanest at his table.

Not long after our sitting down, "I have strange news brought me," saith Mr. Secretary, "this morning, that divers scholars of Eton be run away from the school for fear of beating." Whereupon Mr. Secretary took occasion to wish that some more discretion were in many schoolmasters, in using correction, than commonly there is; who many times punish rather the weakness of nature than the fault of the scholar; whereby many scholars, that might else prove well, be driven to hate learning before they know what learning meaneth, and so are made willing to forsake their book and be glad to be put to any other kind of living.

Mr. Peter, as one somewhat severe of nature, said plainly that the rod only was the sword that must keep the school in obedience and the scholar in good order. Mr. Wotton, a man mild of nature, with soft voice and few words, inclined to Mr. Secretary's judgment, and



said: "In mine opinion, the schoolhouse should be indeed, as it is called by name, the house of play and pleasure, and not of fear and bondage. And as I do remember, so saith Socrates in one place of Plato. And therefore, if a rod carry the fear of a sword, it is no marvel if those that be fearful of nature choose rather to forsake the play, than to stand always within the fear of a sword in a fond man's handling."

Mr. Mason, after his manner, was very merry with both parties, pleasantly playing both with the shrewd touches of many curst boys, and with the small discretion of many lewd schoolmasters. Mr. Haddon was fully of Mr. Peter's opinion, and said that the best schoolmaster of our time was the greatest beater; and named the person. "Though," quoth I, "it was his good fortune to send from his school unto the university one of the best scholars indeed of all our time, yet wise men do think that that came so to pass rather by the great towardness of the scholar than by the great beating of the master; and whether this be true or no, you yourself are best witness." I said somewhat farther in the matter how and why young children were sooner allured by love, than driven by beating, to attain good learning; wherein I was the bolder to say my mind because Mr. Secretary courteously provoked me thereunto, or else in such a company, and namely in his presence, my wont is to be more willing to use mine ears than to occupy my tongue. Sir Walter Mildmay, Mr. Astley, and the rest, said very little; only Sir Richard Sackville said nothing at all.

After dinner I went up to read with the Queen's Majesty. We read then together in the Greek tongue, as I well remember, that noble oration of Demosthenes against Aeschines for his false dealing in his embassy to King Philip of Macedonia. Sir Richard Sackville came up soon after, and finding me in her Majesty's privy chamber, he took me by the hand, and carrying me to a window said: "Mr. Ascham, I would not for a good deal of money have been this day absent from dinner,

where though I said nothing, yet I gave as good ear, and do consider as well the talk that passed, as any one did there. Mr. Secretary said very wisely, and most truly, that many young wits be driven to hate learning before they know what learning is. I can be good witness to this myself. For a fond schoolmaster, before I was fully fourteen years old, drave me so, with fear of beating, from all love of learning, as now—when I know what difference it is to have learning, and to have little or none at all—I feel it my greatest grief, and find it my greatest hurt that ever came to me, that it was my so ill chance to light upon so lewd a schoolmaster. But seeing it is but in vain to lament things past, and also wisdom to look to things to come, surely, God willing, if God lend me life, I will make this my mishap some occasion of good hap to little Robert Sackville, my son's son. For whose bringing up I would gladly, if it so please you, use specially your good advice. I hear say you have a son much of his age. We will deal thus together. Point you out a schoolmaster who by your order shall teach my son and yours, and for all the rest I will provide; yea, though they three do cost me a couple of hundred pounds by year. And beside, you shall find me as fast a friend to you and yours as perchance any you have." Which promise the worthy gentleman surely kept with me until his dying day.

We had then further talk together of bringing up of children; of the nature of quick and hard wits; of the right choice of a good wit; of fear and love in teaching children. We passed from children and came to young men, namely Gentlemen. We talked of their too much liberty to live as they lust; of their letting loose too soon to overmuch experience of ill, contrary to the good order of many good old commonwealths of the Persians and Greeks; of wit gathered and good fortune gotten by some only by experience, without learning. And lastly, he required of me very earnestly to show what I thought of the common going of English men into Italy.

“But,” saith he, “because this place and this time will not suffer so long talk as these good matters require, therefore I pray you, at my request, and at your leisure, put in some order of writing the chief points of this our talk concerning the right order of teaching and honesty of living, for the good bringing up of children and young men. And surely, beside contenting me, you shall both please and profit very many others.” I made some excuse by lack of ability and weakness of body. “Well,” saith he, “I am not now to learn what you can do. Our dear friend, Mr. Goodrick, whose judgment I could well believe, did once for all satisfy me fully therein. Again, I heard you say not long ago that you may thank Sir John Cheke for all the learning you have. And I know very well myself that you did teach the Queen. And therefore seeing God did so bless you, to make you the scholar of the best master, and also the schoolmaster of the best scholar, that ever were in our time, surely you should please God, benefit your country, and honest your own name, if you would take the pains to impart to others what you learned of such a master, and how ye taught such a scholar. And in uttering the stuff ye received of the one, in declaring the order ye took with the other, ye shall never lack neither matter nor manner, what to write nor how to write, in this kind of argument.” I, beginning some farther excuse, suddenly was called to come to the Queen.

The night following I slept little, my head was so full of this our former talk, and I so mindful somewhat to satisfy the honest request of so dear a friend. I thought to prepare some little treatise for a New Year’s gift that Christmas. But, as it chanceth to busy builders, so, in building this my poor schoolhouse (the rather because the form of it is somewhat new, and differing from others), the work rose daily higher and wider than I thought it would in the beginning. And though it appear now, and be in very deed, but a small cottage, poor for the stuff and rude for the workmanship, yet in going forward I found the site so good as I was loth to give

it over, but the making so costly, outreaching my ability, as many times I wished that some one of those three my dear friends with full purses, Sir Thomas Smith, Mr. Haddon, or Mr. Watson, had had the doing of it. Yet nevertheless I myself, spending gladly that little that I gat at home by good Sir John Cheke, and that that I borrowed abroad of my friend Sturmius, beside somewhat that was left me in reversion by my old masters Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero, I have at last patched it up as I could, and as you see.

XII. CONCLUSION. We have now reached the extreme end of what might be called the long period of preparation in English literature, for up to this time the name of Chaucer is the only one of great and world-wide significance, but we are on the eve of the vast creative period that is almost coincident with the reign of Queen Elizabeth. In the chapter which we are now closing, we have passed over more than one hundred fifty years of English history. Chaucer died in 1400, and Elizabeth ascended the throne in 1558. We began this chapter at the reign of Henry IV and we have seen on the throne all of the remaining Henrys, the fifth and sixth Edwards, the third Richard and Queen Mary.

At the beginning of the period England was in the last stages of the Hundred Years' War, and included within this time are the long and destructive Wars of the Roses and the steady rise of the Tudor family to arbitrary power. England had finally laid aside, too, her allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church, and henceforth devotes herself to the Episcopal, or

Established, Church. Columbus discovered America in 1492, but up to Elizabeth's time England had made no great use of the knowledge she possessed of the marvelous possibilities in the New World. When the Queen ascended the throne, there were no settlements on the North American continent, though its eastern coast had been partially explored.

The Renaissance, or revival of learning, which we have discussed at considerable length in our studies of continental literature, made its way into England during the period which we have just studied, but its brilliant effects were to be shown under Elizabeth. Some scholars at Oxford received from an Italian humanist named Vitelli an inspiration which made them famous advocates of the new ideas, and Grocyn, who studied Greek in Italy, returned in 1491, and by his lectures at Oxford still further increased the enthusiasm. Linacre, another Oxford man, translated the works of Galen and established medical lectureships in the great universities. We notice at once the more practical nature of the English, who, from the beginning, were not satisfied with the pleasures of learning to be obtained from the classics, but endeavored to apply the new knowledge to the education of their youth, the general improvement of public morals and the development of science.

Among those most ardent in awakening a national interest in Christianity was John Colet, who was born about 1467 in London, and,

after studying in Oxford, traveled extensively in France and Italy. In his journeys he formed the acquaintance of Erasmus, mingled with the gay scholars in the court of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and studied Greek with the single purpose of finding a means by which he could present to the people the pure doctrines of the *New Testament*. Green, in his *Short History of the English People*, says: "The great fabric of belief built up by the medieval doctors seemed to him simply the 'corruptions of schoolmen.' In the life and sayings of its Founder he found a simple and rational Christianity, whose fittest expression was the Apostles' Creed. 'About the rest,' he said with characteristic impatience, 'let divines dispute as they will.' " Colet is also remembered as the founder of St. Paul's, the famous grammar school, which has always been noted for sound classical learning.

During the reign of Henry VII Erasmus went to England for a brief visit. In 1509, after having studied the classics in Italy, he went again to England as professor of Greek at Oxford, where he worked with Colet, translated grammars for the new grammar schools which were being rapidly established during Henry VIII's reign, and published the Greek *New Testament* with a Latin translation and critical notes. The devotion of Erasmus to learning was boundless.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE ELIZABETHAN AGE ; FOUR GREAT PROSE WRITERS

**G**ENERAL CHARACTERISTICS. When Queen Elizabeth came to the throne of England in 1558, a new epoch began in the history of English literature. It was a marvelous time indeed, and every human endeavor was in the high tide of advancement. The discovery of America had opened a new world to the wondering gaze of the people, and subsequent discoveries and explorations kept England in the heat of excitement. Sir Francis Drake, under the British flag, sailed into unknown seas, entered the Pacific and, wintering on the western coast of North America near San Francisco Bay, continued his voyage around the world.

Sir Walter Raleigh made his attempts to colonize America, and the English prepared to occupy the wilderness on the Atlantic coast. The foundation of England's great empire in the East was laid by the London merchants who formed the East India Company. It is difficult for us to conceive the effect these exciting adventures had upon the temper and intellect of the people. Discovery and exploration, however, were but one of her many thrilling experiences. England was at war with Spain, who had gathered its Invincible Armada, but the heavy, lumbering Spanish vessels were destroyed by England's experienced captains, aided by storms, and England became mistress of the seas.

Church and State were inseparable. The Queen ruled as the direct representative of God, and whoever resisted the Church was a rebel and a traitor. England was divided between the Catholic and Protestant faiths, with the Jesuits at one extreme and the Puritans at the other, and the same spirit which had prompted adventure and exploration taught people to think for themselves. In the religious struggles Elizabeth favored the Established Church, and when the Catholics refused to subscribe to its tenets Elizabeth tortured them into submission, but in turn was excommunicated by the Pope. Her Parliament stood by her, and before the reign was over she was victorious, and the creed of her Church was settled in the Thirty-nine Articles that still



govern it. Nevertheless, the spirit of personal religious inquiry was growing, and the judgment of individuals was becoming vastly more important to England than the substitution of one Church for another.

Of the political struggles and constant succession of plots which filled her reign we have already learned, but on the whole the people were loyal to their Queen, in whose masculine habits, vain and ostentatious way of living and repelling intrigues they found some elements of popularity which we cannot understand but which were perfectly in harmony with the spirit of the age.

At present we are concerned more directly with the life and energy which manifested itself in the realm of pure intellect. On the continent Galileo and Copernicus, persecuted by the Church of Rome, were advocating their theories with a daring and persistence as great as that of Drake's, while at home Lord Bacon was reconstructing the whole system of abstract philosophy upon a basis fully in accord with liberalizing tendencies and establishing it upon observation and reason. All these wonderful traits of physical activity, daring, free discussion and ostentatious accomplishment worked together to produce a wonderful literature, which stands unrivaled in English history. One has only to mention the names of Bacon, Spenser and Shakespeare to realize at once how great the age was in prose and poetry and how absolutely unrivaled in the

drama. Many other writers there were who are still read, whose influence even now is felt, but whose importance is not sufficient to justify us in considering them at length. However, there are three names so great that any attempt to give them due attention would exclude all the others, Sir Francis Bacon, philosopher and essayist; Edmund Spenser, "the poets' poet," "the rightest English poet;" and William Shakespeare, the greatest in all literature.

During the first quarter century of Elizabeth's reign, prose was of little interest and of less value; the vivid imagination of the people demanded excitement, the play of fancy, and the glitter of figures that only poetry could afford. People had money to spend, were anxious to be amused, and sought books of poetry and romance, which appeared in the form of countless tales and poems based upon the stirring events of the day. Public imagination was active and childlike, so that the influence of the Italian school, which had manifested itself to some extent in the writings of Chaucer, came to be the ruling spirit of the romantic age.

II. EUPHUISM. The fantastic spirit of the time found expression in a peculiar kind of writing and speech that was practiced by many of the courtiers and affected by many brilliant men and women outside of royalty. We have seen in the early salons of France an exhibition of a similar spirit to that which now invaded England under the name of *euphuism*,

so called from the name of the principal character in a prose romance, *Euphues, the Anatomy of Wit*, written by John Lyly and published in 1579. Euphues talked in enigmatical sentences with far-fetched and obscure figures and labored antitheses.

John Lyly was born probably in 1554, in one of the small towns in Kent. At Oxford he gained reputation as a wit, and the first part of his *Euphues* made him celebrated at once. Soon afterward he began to write for the children trained as choristers in the Savoy Chapel and St. Paul's Cathedral a series of plays, for which he is at the present day chiefly celebrated, though his influence upon the cultivated literary taste of England was caused more by the work previously mentioned. Euphuism spells bad taste and affectation, but still, its extraordinary popularity at that time both in England and elsewhere is one of the marked characteristics of the time, and it is probably owing to that fact that Lyly's best work, his plays and his charming lyrics, have been so nearly forgotten, while his euphuistic performances still are associated with his name.

Much of Lyly's life seems to have been spent in continued application for better places at court. It is said that Queen Elizabeth patronized him, and he certainly occupied some responsible positions, but in one of his petitions he tells the Queen: "For these ten years I have attended with an unwearied patience, and now I know not what crab took me for an oyster,

that in the midst of your sunshine, of your most gracious aspect, hath thrust a stone between the shells to eat me alive that only live on dead hopes.”

An example of his style at the best is the following:

It is therefore a most evident sign of God's singular favor towards him, that he is endued with all these qualities, without the which man is most miserable. But if there be any one that thinketh wit not necessary to the obtaining of wisdom, after he hath gotten the way to virtue, and industry, and exercise, he is a heretic, in my opinion, touching the true faith in learning. For if nature play not her part, in vain is labor; and, as it is said before, if study be not employed, in vain is nature. Sloth turneth the edge of wit, study sharpeneth the mind; a thing, be it never so easy, is hard to the idle; a thing, be it never so hard, is easy to wit well employed. And most plainly we may see in many things the efficacy of industry and labor. The little drops of rain pierce the hard marble; iron, with often handling, is worn to nothing. Besides this, industry showeth herself in other things; the fertile soil, if it be never tilled, doth wax barren; and that which is most noble by nature is made most vile by negligence. What tree, if it be not topped, beareth any fruit? What vine, if it be not pruned, bringeth forth grapes? Is not the strength of the body turned to weakness with too much delicacy? Were not Milo his arms brawn-fallen for want of wrestling? Moreover, by labor the fierce unicorn is tamed, the wildest falcon is reclaimed, the greatest bulwark is sacked.

His eccentric metaphors and ridiculous illustrations drawn from natural history are enough to entertain for a time the modern reader; as witness, the following:

The filthy sow when she is sick eateth the sea-crab and is immediately recovered: the tortoise having tasted the viper sucketh origanum and is quickly revived: the bear, ready to pine, licketh up the ants, and is recovered: the hart, being pierced with the dart, runneth out of hand to the herb dictanum, and is healed. And can men by no herb, by no art, by no way, procure a remedy for the impatient disease of love? Ah! well, I perceive that Love is not unlike the fig-tree, whose fruit is sweet, whose root is more bitter than the claw of a bittern.

An extract on a higher plane is the following:

The sharp northeast wind doth never last three days; tempests have but a short time; and the more violent the thunder is, the less permanent it is. In the like manner, it falleth out with the jars and crossings of friends, which, begun in a minute, are ended in a moment. Necessary it is that among freinds there should be some over-thwarting; but to continue in anger, not convenient. The camel first troubleth the water before he drink; the frankincense is burned before it smell; friends are tried before they are trusted, lest, like the carbuncle as though they had fire, they be found, being touched, to be without fire. Friendship should be like the wine which Homer, much commending, calleth Maroneum, whereof one pint being mingled with five quarts of water, yet it keepeth his old strength and virtue, not to be qualified by any discourtesy. Where salt doth grow, nothing else can breed; where friendship is built, no offense can harbor.

As we have intimated, Lyly's real genius lay in the writing of lyrics, and the songs of his plays are natural and musical. From his drama of *Alexander and Campaspe*, performed before the Queen in 1584, is taken the following song:

O cruel Love! on thee I lay  
My curse, which shall strike blind the day;  
Never may sleep, with velvet hand,  
Charm thine eyes with sacred wand;  
Thy goalers shall be hopes and fears;  
Thy prison-mates groans, sighs, and tears;  
Thy play, to wear out weary times,  
Fantastic passions, vows, and rhymes.  
Thy bread be frowns, thy drink be gall,  
Such as when you Phao call;  
The bed thou liest on be despair,  
Thy sleep fond dreams, thy dreams long care.  
Hope, like thy fool, at thy bed's head,  
Mocks thee till madness strike thee dead.  
As, Phao, thou dost me with thy proud eyes;  
In thee poor Sappho lives, for thee she dies.

The song which follows is from the same source:

What bird so sings, yet so does wail?  
Oh, 'tis the ravished nightingale—  
Jug, jug, jug, jug—teru—she cries,  
And still her woes at midnight rise.  
Brave prick-song! who is't now we hear?  
None but the lark so shrill and clear;  
Now at heaven's gate she claps her wings,  
The morn not waking till she sings.  
Hark! hark! but what a pretty note,  
Poor Robin Redbreast tunes his throat;  
Hark! how the jolly cuckoos sing  
"Cuckoo!" to welcome in the spring.

III. SIR WALTER RALEIGH. The Elizabethan Age was distinguished by four great prose writers, named in order of their rank—Raleigh, Sidney, Hooker and Bacon. Typical of his age as a brilliant man of action, as well as a writer of distinction, was Sir Walter Ra-

leigh, an almost universal genius. Raleigh (more properly spelled Ralegh) (1552-1618) was born in Devonshire and educated at Oriel College, Oxford. Until his twenty-sixth year we know little of his life except that he went to France, fought in the Huguenot army, and probably remained there for a long time. In 1578, however, he appeared in England, to sail, probably, to the West Indies with the famous Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who was the son of Raleigh's mother by a previous marriage. In this first unsuccessful expedition Raleigh cut comparatively a small figure, and, after returning to court, he was seen bearing a challenge from the Earl of Oxford to Sir Philip Sidney. On two different occasions Raleigh was imprisoned as a result of similar affairs, yet it is probable that Sir Sidney's influence established him at court after an absence in Ireland and opened the way for the favors which Queen Elizabeth showed him.

If he did not, as frequently related, lay his rich cloak across a muddy place for Queen Elizabeth to walk upon, yet the act was quite in keeping with his character. At any rate, he became the prime favorite of Elizabeth, who kept him at court, showered gifts upon him, granted him vast estates, knighted him and showed him such favor that much unpleasant scandal was created. From the beginning he had been interested in explorations, but the Queen refused to let him travel, and he had to content himself with organizing various ex-

peditions. In 1592, however, he fell into disgrace with Elizabeth, because of her discovery of an intrigue he was carrying on with Elizabeth Throgmorton, one of her maids-of-honor, and he and his lady were imprisoned in the Tower. After some months of confinement, however, he was released; he married the maid, and, though forbidden the court in consequence, appears to have lived happily with his wife.

After engaging in one or two fruitless expeditions, he was, on the accession of James I, whom he had antagonized, sent to the Tower on a charge of high treason. At his trial he was found guilty and condemned to death, but the penalty was afterward commuted to imprisonment and for fourteen years he lay in the Tower. During this time he commenced his ambitious history of the world, which, however, he was unable to bring farther down than the year 103 B. C. In 1616 he was released to take command of an expedition to the Orinoco, but he was in ill health and unfitted to lead, and his deputy did nothing more than burn the Spanish settlement of San Tomas. Raleigh had been warned that no action against Spain would be tolerated; when he returned to England the Spanish ambassador sought revenge for the outrage, and Raleigh was again imprisoned. Strangely enough, he was not tried for this offense, but the King's officers resurrected the old sentence, under which he had been so long imprisoned, and caused the valiant



soldier to be executed. The people were not in sympathy with this act, and Raleigh's remarkable bearing at all times, particularly on the scaffold, endeared him to the English, who made him one of their great popular heroes.

On the expeditions which Raleigh organized and conducted while in favor, he was instrumental in establishing at Newfoundland the first English colony in the New World, in obtaining a grant of Virginia, where his settlements were failures, yet, nevertheless, primarily instrumental in establishing English rule on the Atlantic seaboard. His contributions to English knowledge of the New World were boundless, and while he may not have introduced them, at the same time he made popular among the English people two articles of commerce which have since become of such great importance, namely, the potato and tobacco.

Raleigh was a vigorous, capable writer of excellent prose, and as a poet might have ranked very high had he not been so much the business man. Unfortunately, his reputation, more than that of any one else of his age, has suffered from the loss of his works. It is inexplicable that they should have so completely disappeared. In fact, aside from his history and a few comparatively brief articles, nothing remains of his prose, and of his poems the longest and most important have disappeared utterly. Nevertheless, it is not unfair to give him rank among the great lights of his age. We can give but a few brief specimens of his

prose. Of English valor, the quality he possessed in so remarkable a degree, he says:

All that have read of Cressy and Agincourt will bear me witness that I do not allege the battle of Poitiers for lack of other good examples of the English virtue; the proof whereof hath left many a hundred better marks, in all quarters of France, then ever did the valor of the Romans. If any man impute these victories of ours to the long-bow, as carrying farther, piercing more strongly, and quicker of discharge than the French cross-bow, my answer is ready—that in all these respects it is also (being drawn with a strong arm) superior to the musket; yet is the musket a weapon of more use. The gun and the cross-bow are of like force when discharged by a boy or a woman as when by a strong man; weakness, or sickness, or a sore finger, makes the long-bow unserviceable. More particularly, I say that it was the custom of our ancestors to shoot, for the most part, point-blank; and so shall he perceive that will note the circumstances of almost any one battle. This takes away all objection, for when two armies are within the distance of a butt's length, one flight of arrows, or two at the most, can be delivered before they close. Neither is it, in general, true that the long-bow reacheth farther, or that it pierceth more strongly than the cross-bow. But this is the rare effect of an extraordinary arm, whereupon can be grounded no common rule. If any man shall ask, how then came it to pass that the English won so many great battles, having no advantage to help him, I may, with best commendation of modesty, refer him to the French historian, who, relating the victory of our men at Crevent, where they passed a bridge in face of the enemy, useth these words: "The English comes with a conquering bravery, as he that was accustomed to gain everywhere without any stay; he forceth our guard, placed upon the bridge to keep the passage" (John de Serres). Or, I may cite another place of the same author, where he tells us how the Britons, being

invaded by Charles VIII, King of France, thought it good policy to apparel twelve hundred of their own men in English cassocks, that the very sight of the English red cross would be enough to terrify the French. But I will not stand to borrow of the French historians (all of which, excepting de Serres and Paulus Aemilius, report wonders of our nation); the proposition which first I undertook to maintain, that the military virtue of the English prevailing against all manner of difficulties ought to be preferred before that of the Romans, which was assisted with all advantages that could be desired. If it be demanded, why, then, did not our kings finish the conquest as Caesar had done, my answer may be—I hope without offense—that our kings were like to the race of the *Acacidae*, of whom the old poet Ennius gave this note: *Belli potentes sunt magis quam sapienti potentes*—They were more warlike than politic. Whoso notes their proceedings may find that none of them went to work like a conqueror, save only King Henry V, the course of whose victories it pleased God to interrupt by his death.

In Raleigh's advice to his son he gives "three rules to be observed for the preservation of a man's estate":

Amongst all other things of the world, take care of thy estate, which thou shalt ever preserve if thou observe three things: first, that thou know what thou hast, what everything is worth that thou hast, and to see that thou art not wasted by thy servants and officers. The second is, that thou never spend anything before thou have it; for borrowing is the canker and death of every man's estate. The third is, that thou suffer not thyself to be wounded for other men's faults, and scourged for other men's offenses; which is, the surety for another, for thereby millions of men have been beggared and destroyed, paying the reckoning of other men's riot, and the charge of other men's folly and prodigality; if thou

smart, smart for thine own sins; and, above all things, be not made an ass to carry the burdens of other men: if any friend desire thee to be his surety, give him a part of what thou hast to spare; if he press thee further, he is not thy friend at all, for friendship rather chooseth harm to itself than offereth it. If thou be bound for a stranger, thou art a fool; if for a merchant, thou puttest thy estate to learn to swim; if for a churchman, he hath no inheritance; if for a lawyer, he will find an invasion by a syllable or word to abuse thee; if for a poor man, thou must pay it thyself; if for a rich man, he needs not: therefore from suretyship, as from a manslaughter or enchanter, bless thyself; for the best profit and return will be this, that if thou force him for whom thou art bound, to pay it himself, he will become thy enemy; if thou use to pay it thyself, thou wilt be a beggar; and believe thy father in this, and print it in thy thought, that what virtue soever thou hast, be it never so manifold, if thou be poor withal, thou and thy qualities shall be despised. Besides, poverty is oftentimes sent as a curse of God; it is a shame amongst men, an imprisonment of the mind, a vexation of every worthy spirit: thou shalt neither help thyself, nor others; thou shalt drown thee in all thy virtues, having no means to show them; thou shalt be a burden and an eyesore to thy friends; every man will fear thy company; thou shalt be driven basely to beg and depend on others, to flatter unworthy men, to make dishonest shifts: and, to conclude, poverty provokes a man to do infamous and detested deeds; let no vanity, therefore, or persuasion, draw thee to that worst of worldly miseries.

If thou be rich, it will give thee pleasure in health, comfort in sickness, keep thy mind and body free, save thee from many perils, relieve thee in thy elder years, relieve the poor and thy honest friends, and give means to thy posterity to live, and defend themselves and thine own fame. Where it is said in the Proverbs, "That he shall be sore vexed that is surety for a stranger, and he that hateth suretyship is sure;" it is further said, "The

poor is hated even of his own neighbor, but the rich have many friends." Lend not to him that is mightier than thyself, for if thou lendest him, count it but lost; be not surety above thy power, for if thou be surety, think to pay it.

That at times he grew unrestrainedly eloquent may be seen from the following apostrophe:

It is Death alone that can suddenly make man to know himself. He tells the proud and insolent that they are but abjects, and humbles them at the instant, makes them cry, complain and repent, yea, even to hate their fore-past happiness. He takes the account of the rich, and proves him a beggar, a naked beggar, which hath interest in nothing but in the gravel that fills his mouth. He holds a glass before the eyes of the most beautiful, and makes them see therein their deformity and rottenness, and they acknowledge it.

O eloquent, just, and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none have dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world have flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised; thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words, *Hic jacet!*

Raleigh had many great and powerful friends. He was intimate with Sidney, knew Spenser well and was praised by him, was at one time a friend of Bacon, and, though the latter was undoubtedly instrumental in confining Raleigh to the Tower, yet he read the philosopher's works with pleasure and profit during his incarceration. Indeed, Raleigh was a real wit, and he expressed himself with liveliness and brilliancy upon any subject

which attracted his interest, so that to-day he stands as an excellent example of the occasional poet. However, we have no means of judging his ability in sustained work, for of his long poem, *Cynthia*, in honor of Elizabeth, only one unfinished, unpolished book, the twenty-first, remains in existence.

Marlowe wrote the delightful pastoral, *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love*, which appears on page 8607, under the title *The Milkmaid's Song*.

Raleigh caught the spirit of the occasion and gave *The Nymph's Reply* in the lines following *The Milkmaid's Song*, called there *The Milkmaid's Mother's Answer*.

A beautiful lyric that seems to be properly accredited to Raleigh was appended to Spenser's *Astrophel* in the form of sixty elegiac quatrains, of which the first three are as follows:

To praise thy life, or wail thy worthy death,  
And want thy wit—thy wit high, pure, divine—  
Is far beyond the power of mortal line,  
Nor any one hath worth that draweth breath.

Yet rich in zeal, though poor in learning's lore,  
And friendly care obscured in secret breast,  
And Love that envy in thy life suppressed,  
Thy dear life done, and death, hath doubled more.

And I, that in thy time and living state,  
Did only praise thy virtues in my thought,  
As one that seeled the rising sun hath sought,  
With words and tears now wail thy timeless fate.

The celebrated lyric, *Passions*, an intellectual and artistic creation, is probably Raleigh's, for, although its authorship has been disputed, it has not been disproved:

Passions are likened best to floods and streams;  
The shallow murmur, but the deep are dumb;  
So, when affections yield discourse, it seems  
The bottom is but shallow whence they come.  
They that are rich in words, in words discover,  
That they are poor in that which makes a lover.

Wrong not, sweet empress of my heart,  
The merit of true passion,  
With thinking that he feels no smart,  
That sues for no compassion;

Since if my complaints serve not t' approve  
The conquest of thy beauty,  
It comes not from excess of love,  
But from excess of duty:

For knowing that I sue to serve  
A saint of such perfection,  
As all desire, but none deserve,  
A place in her affection,

I rather choose to want relief,  
Than venture the revealing—  
Where glory recommends the grief,  
Despair distrusts the healing.

Thus those desires that aim too high  
For any mortal lover,  
When reason cannot make them die,  
Discretion doth them cover.

Yet when discretion doth bereave  
The complaints that they should utter,



*From an Old Print*

**SIR PHILIP SIDNEY**

**1554-1586**





Then thy discretion may perceive  
That silence is a suitor.

Silence in love bewrays more woe  
Than words though ne'er so witty;  
A beggar that is dumb, you know,  
May challenge double pity.

Then wrong not, dearest to my heart!  
My true, though secret passion;  
He smarteth most that hides his smart,  
And sues for no compassion.

That Raleigh was capable of something more stately and of more serious import than the lightsome lyrics we have quoted is abundantly proved by the sonnet prefixed to the *Lucan* of Sir Arthur Gorges:

Had Lucan hid the truth to please the time,  
He had been too unworthy of thy pen,  
Who never sought nor ever cared to climb  
By flattery or seeking worthless men.  
For this thou hast been bruised, but yet those scars  
Do beautify no less than those wounds do,  
Received in just and in religious wars;  
Though thou hast bled by both, and bearest them too.  
Change not! to change thy fortune 'tis too late;  
Who with a manly faith resolves to die  
May promise to himself a lasting state,  
Though not so great, yet free from infamy;  
Such was thy Lucan, whom so to translate,  
Nature thy Muse like Lucan's did create.

IV. SIR PHILIP SIDNEY. If Philip Sidney (1554–1586) did not rank with Hooker and Bacon as a writer of prose, and if his poetry is inferior to that of his great successors, he was as thoroughly characteristic of the Eliza-

bethan Age as was Sir Walter Raleigh or any other noted man. His father, Sir Henry, was Lord Deputy of Ireland and one of the first statesmen of his time; his mother was the daughter of John Dudley, the Duke of Northumberland, who at one time was all but king; and Philip's godfather was a king of Spain. The young boy was distinguished for his precocity, the gentle dignity of his bearing and the sweetness of his disposition, and through life the latter characteristics followed him. He was the very mirror of chivalry in its latest stages, a courtier of exquisite manners, high moral character and rich intellectual attainments. His precocity turned to a profound love for knowledge and in every act of his life he found something to enrich his mind.

After three years at Oxford he went to Paris, where he became a great favorite of Charles IX, but he was so appalled by the massacre of St. Bartholomew, of which he was a reluctant witness, that he hastened to Germany, remained for a long time with a Protestant divine, and then moved on to Italy and later to Austria, Hungary and Poland. On his return to England he became a favorite attendant of Elizabeth, who regarded him as one of the finest jewels of her court. Here he found opportunity to become the patron of men of letters generally, and of Spenser in particular, and when, having quarreled with the Earl of Oxford and antagonized the Queen because of his opposition to her contemplated marriage

with the Duke of Anjou, he retired to Wilton and lived with his sister, who by that time was the Countess of Pembroke. During this retirement, perhaps aided by his sister, he wrote for her the *Arcadia*, which, however, was not published until 1590, four years after the author's death.

In 1583, again in favor, he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth and contemplated an expedition with Sir Francis Drake, which, however, the Queen frustrated, as she did not wish to lose him from her court. However, soon afterward, finding it necessary to send assistance to the Protestants in the Netherlands, she appointed Sidney governor of Flushing; when the Earl of Leicester arrived with an army of six thousand men, Sir Philip joined him as general of the horse. In this unfortunate campaign Sidney's exploits were highly honorable, but in September, 1586, he met a company of Spaniards and in a skirmish at Zutphen received a mortal wound. The well-known anecdote told of this occasion illustrates perfectly the character of the man. As he was being carried from the field, overcome with thirst due to bleeding and fatigue, he called for water, which was brought to him. As he was lifting it to his mouth a desperately wounded soldier, who was being carried by, fixed his eyes longingly on the cup, and Sidney, observing this, handed him the drink, saying, "Thy necessity is yet greater than mine." When Sidney died on the nineteenth of October all

England mourned, and his funeral pageant the following February was unrivaled in display until that of Lord Nelson. "It was accounted a sin for months afterwards for any gentleman of quality to wear gay apparel in London."

It is for his prose that Sidney deserves best to be remembered, though some of his poetry is excellent in many respects. Besides the *Arcadia*, to which we have alluded, his chief production is a *Defense of Poetry*, which is not only noteworthy in itself, but bears the distinction of being the first critical essay on that subject in the English language. The *Arcadia* is a long and involved romance with a loosely-constructed plot, many robberies, abductions and other exciting incidents. Its great length and the mechanical written-to-order poems which fill it make it tedious to the modern reader, although it possesses all kinds of literary beauties. Flowery, figurative and perpetually glittering, yet in this respect he fell far short of the euphuism of Lyly, in his strife for perpetual beauty. Cowper characterized him felicitously when he called him a "warbler of poetic prose," though his style was occasionally pedantic and over-inflated. As Dr. Zouch says, "There are passages in this work exquisitely beautiful—useful observations on life and manners—a variety and accurate discrimination of characters—fine sentiments expressed in strong and adequate terms—animated descriptions, equal to any that occur in the ancient or modern poets—

sage lessons of morality, and judicious reflections on government and policy.”

It is useless to try to give an epitome of the *Arcadia*, but a few extracts, such as the following description of a tempest, may be quoted :

There arose even with the sun a veil of dark clouds before his face, which shortly, like ink poured into water, had blacked over all the face of heaven, preparing, as it were, a mournful stage for a tragedy to be played on. For, forthwith the winds began to speak louder, and, as in a tumultuous kingdom, to think themselves fittest instruments of commandment ; and blowing whole storms of hail and rain upon them, they were sooner in danger than they could almost bethink themselves of change. For then the traitorous sea began to swell in pride against the afflicted navy, under which, while the heaven favored them, it had lain so calmly ; making mountains of itself, over which the tossed and tottering ship should climb, to be straight carried down again to a pit of hellish darkness, with such cruel blows against the sides of the ship, that, which way soever it went, was still in his malice, that there was left neither power to stay nor way to escape. And shortly had it so dis severed the loving company, which the day before had tarried together, that most of them never met again, but were swallowed up in his never-satisfied mouth.

A stag hunt is thus described :

Then went they together abroad, the good Kalander entertaining them with pleasant discoursing—how well he loved the sport of hunting when he was a young man, how much in the comparison thereof he disdained all chamber delights, that the sun (how great a journey soever he had to make) could never prevent him with earliness, nor the moon, with her sober countenance, dissuade him from watching till midnight for the deer’s feeding. “Oh,” said he, “you will never live to my age,

without you keep yourselves in breath with exercise, and in heart with joyfulness; too much thinking doth consume the spirit; and oft it falls out, that, while one thinks too much of his doing, he leaves to do the effect of his thinking." Then spared he not to remember, how much Arcadia was changed since his youth; activity and good fellowship being nothing in the price it was then held in; but, according to the nature of the old-growing world, still worse and worse. Then would he tell them stories of such gallants as he had known; and so, with pleasant company, beguiled the time's haste, and shortened the way's length, till they came to the side of the wood, where the hounds were in couples, staying their coming, but with a whining accent craving liberty; many of them in color and marks so resembling, that it showed they were of one kind. The huntsmen handsomely attired in their green liveries, as though they were children of summer, with staves in their hands to beat the guiltless earth, when the hounds were at a fault; and with horns about their necks, to sound an alarum upon a silly fugitive: the hounds were straight uncoupled, and ere long the stag thought it better to trust to the nimbleness of his feet than to the slender fortification of his lodging; but even his feet betrayed him; for, howsoever they went, they themselves uttered themselves to the scent of their enemies, who one taking it of another, and sometimes believing the wind's advertisement, sometimes the view of their faithful counselors the huntsmen, with open mouths, then denounced war, when the war was already begun. Their cry being composed of so well-sorted mouths, that any man would perceive therein some kind of proportion, but the skillful woodmen did find a music. Then delight and variety of opinion drew the horsemen sundry ways, yet cheering their hounds with voice and horn, kept still as it were together. The wood seemed to conspire with them against his own citizens, dispersing their noise through all his quarters; and even the nymph Echo left to bewail the loss of Narcissus, and became a hunter. But the stag was in the end so hotly pursued, that, leaving his

fight, he was driven to make courage of despair; and so turning his head, made the hounds, with change of speech, to testify that he was at a bay: as if from hot pursuit of their enemy, they were suddenly come to a parley.

He begins his *Defense of Poetry* with a celebration of the skill of his Italian riding master:

He stayed till I caused Mopsa bid him do something upon his horse; which no sooner said, than with a kind rather of quick gesture than show of violence, you might see him come towards me, beating the ground in so due time as no dancer can observe better measure. If you remember the ship we saw once when the sea went high upon the coast of Argos, so went the beast. But he, as if centaur like he had been one piece with the horse, was no more moved than one with the going of his own legs; and in effect so did he command him as his own limbs: for though he had both spurs and wand, they seemed rather marks of sovereignty than instruments of punishment, his hand and leg, with most pleasing grace, commanding without threatening, and rather remembering than chastising; at least if sometimes he did, it was so stolen as neither our eyes could discern it, nor the horse with any change did complain of it: he ever going so just with the horse, either forthright or turning, that it seemed as he borrowed the horse's body, so he lent the horse his mind. In the turning one might perceive the bridle hand somewhat gently stir; but indeed so gently, as it did rather distill virtue, than use violence. Himself, which methinks is strange, showing at one instant both steadiness and nimbleness; sometimes making him turn close to the ground like a cat, when scratchingly she wheels about after a mouse: sometimes with a little move rising before; now like a raven leaping from ridge to ridge, then like one of Dametas' kids bound over the hillocks; and all so done as neither the lusty kind showed any roughness, nor the easier any idleness, but still like a well obeyed master, whose beck is enough for a discipline, ever concluding each thing



he did with his face to me-wards, as if thence came not only the beginning, but the ending of his motions.

The *Defense of Poetry*, composed in 1581, was a reply to the Puritans, who had called the poets "caterpillars of the commonwealth." The whole work, which is still read with interest by critics, presents the function of poetry with clearness and force. Concerning the euphuists, Sidney says: "They cast sugar and spice upon every dish that is served to the table; like those Indians, not content to wear earrings at the fit and natural place of the ears, but they will thrust jewels through their nose and lips, because they will be sure to be fine."

Sidney's poetry has been neglected as being cold and affected in style, but when really moved by his feelings he wrote some exquisite sonnets. That he had had some affection for Lady Penelope Devereux cannot be doubted, and when he found that she was to be married to Lord Rich, his self-love was wounded and his pride excited by the act. It is out of the question to consider his regard for her thereafter as anything more than Platonic, yet he writes with an abandon that might suggest something else. Two years after the publication of his cycle of sonnets, *Astrophel to Stella*, under which name he celebrates his love for Lady Rich, he was happily married to the daughter of Secretary Walsingham. Palgrave says: "After Shakespeare's sonnets, Sidney's *Astrophel to Stella* offers the most

intense and powerful picture of the passion of love in the whole range of our poetry." The first of this long series of one hundred ten sonnets is as follows:

Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show,  
That she, dear she, might take some pleasure of my  
pain,—

Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her  
know,

Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain,—  
I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe;  
Studying inventions fine, her wits to entertain,  
Oft turning others' leaves, to see if thence would flow  
Some fresh and fruitful showers upon my sunburn'd  
brain.

But words came halting forth, wanting Invention's stay;  
Invention, Nature's child, fled step-dame Study's blows;  
And others' feet still seem'd but strangers in my way.  
Thus, great with child to speak, and helpless in my throes,  
Biting my truant pen, beating myself for spite;  
Fool, said my Muse to me, look in thy heart and write.

The thirty-third sonnet expresses Sidney's remorse over his failure to win the lady while he had the opportunity:

I might!—unhappy now!—O me, I might  
And then would not, or could not, see my bliss;  
Till now, wrapt in a most infernal night,  
I find how heavenly day, wretch! I did miss.  
Heart, rend thyself, thou dost thyself but right;  
No lovely Paris made thy Helen his:  
No force, no fraud, robbed thee of thy delight,  
Nor fortune of thy fortune author is.  
But to myself myself did give the blow.  
While too much wit, forsooth, so troubled me,  
That I respects for both our sakes must show:  
And yet could not by rising morn foresee

How fair a day was near : O punished eyes,  
That I had been more foolish, or more wise !

Sonnet eighty-seven indicates that Stella was at least a betrothed, if not a married, woman, and assures us of Sidney's high sense of duty :

When I was forced from Stella ever dear—  
Stella, food of my thoughts, heart of my heart—  
Stella, whose eyes make all my tempests clear—  
By Stella's laws of duty to depart ;  
Alas ! I found that she with me did smart ;  
I saw that tears did in her eyes appear ;  
I saw that sighs her sweetest lips did part,  
And her sad words my saddened sense did hear.  
For me, I wept to see pearls scattered so ;  
I sighed her sighs, and wailed for her woe ;  
Yet swam in joy, such love in her was seen.  
Thus while the effect most bitter was to me,  
And nothing than the cause more sweet could be,  
I had been vexed, if vexed I had not been.

One of the finest of all the sonnets is the following :

With how sad steps, O Moon ! thou climb'st the skies,  
How silently, and with how wan a face !  
What may it be, that even in heavenly place  
That busy Archer his sharp arrows tries ?  
Sure, if that long with love acquainted eyes  
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case ;  
I read it in thy looks, thy languished grace  
To me that feel the like thy state describes.  
Then, even of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,  
Is constant love deemed there but want of wit ?  
Are beauties there as proud as here they be ?  
Do they above love to be loved, and yet  
Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess ?  
Do they call virtue there ungratefulness ?

V. RICHARD HOOKER. Second only to Bacon among the great prose writers of the Elizabethan Age, and that only because of the quantity and nature of his writings, Richard Hooker appears as one of the great masters of prose style in the English language and one of the finest prose writers of the Elizabethan Age. The nature of his subject is not such as to give him wide popularity, but all students of English know him and appreciate the excellence of his style. He was born in 1554 of poor parents, but his talents and gentle, lovable nature attracted the attention of two eminent ecclesiastics, who provided for his education at Corpus Christi College at Oxford. Here he distinguished himself for scholarship, and at the age of twenty-eight entered the Church.

Going up to London to preach at St. Paul's Cross, he arrived suffering from fatigue and exposure; he was nursed to recovery by the landlady of the inn at which he stopped, and, according to Izaak Walton, his distinguished biographer, "he thought himself bound in conscience to believe all that she said, so the good man came to be persuaded by her that he was a man of tender constitution; and that it was best for him to have a wife that might prove a nurse to him—such a one as might both prolong his life and make it more comfortable; and such a one she could and would provide for him, if he thought fit to marry." Hooker accepted her advice and the wife she provided was her own daughter, who proved to be a silly,

clownish woman, who led him an exceedingly uncomfortable life. With her he removed to a rectory in Buckinghamshire, and there some friends, visiting, found him reading Horace while he was alternately tending sheep and rocking the cradle under the sharp criticisms of his wife. When a friend sympathized with him, he replied: "My dear George, if saints have usually a double share in the miseries of this life, I, that am none, ought not to repine at what my wise Creator hath appointed for me, but labor—as indeed I do daily—to submit mine to His will, and possess my soul in patience and peace."

Later in London he was engaged in religious controversy with the afternoon lecturer at the Temple, and was so much disturbed by this that he wrote to the archbishop, telling him of the work he had begun and closing his letter as follows: "But, my lord, I shall never be able to finish what I have begun, unless I be removed into some quiet parsonage, where I may see God's blessings spring out of my mother-earth, and eat my own bread in peace and privacy; a place where I may, without disturbance, meditate my approaching mortality and that great account which all flesh must give at the last day to the God of all spirits."

The appeal was successful, and Hooker was settled in a rectory at Boscombe in Wiltshire, where he finished four books of his treatise. Queen Elizabeth then became interested in him, and he was removed to the rectory of

Bishopsbourne, where he passed the remainder of his life in quiet and ease. After a month's illness, he died on the second of November, 1601, at the age of forty-seven. "In this time of his sickness and not many days before his death, his house was robbed; of which he having notice, his question was, 'Are my books and written papers safe?' And being answered that they were, his reply was, 'Then it matters not, for no other loss can trouble me.' "

It is unusual that a man of such humility, such gentleness and of so retiring a spirit should write in a style of such grandeur as characterizes his *Ecclesiastical Polity*. Of this remarkable work he finished four books, which were printed in 1594. A fifth book appeared in 1597, but the other three not until nearly fifty years after his death, and then in so mutilated a form that no one can tell whether they were left incomplete, were rewritten from notes which Hooker had left, or had suffered the deliberate excisions and interpolations of editors of both denominations. He was an ardent advocate of the Established Church and thus at loggerheads with both Puritans and Catholics, yet the scholarly nature of his work and the beauty of his English were admitted on all sides. It is said that when Pope Clement remarked that there was no English writer who deserved the name of author, a copy of the *Ecclesiastical Polity* was handed him; after reading the first book he felt impelled to say, "There is no learning this man

hath not searched into—nothing too hard for his understanding; this man, indeed, deserves the name of an author; his books will get reverence by age, for there are in them such seeds of eternity that, if the rest be like this, they shall last till the last fire shall consume all learning.”

Lord Hallam, speaking of the earlier books, says: “So stately and graceful is the march of his periods, so various the fall of his musical cadences upon the ear, so rich in images, so condensed in sentences, so grave and noble his diction, so little is there of vulgarity in his racy idiom, of pedantry in his learned phrase, that I know not whether any later writer has more admirably displayed the capacities of our language, or produced passages more worthy of comparison with the splendid monuments of antiquity.”

Hooker has said, “God and nature did not intend me for contention, but for study and quietness.” Nevertheless, he was drawn into controversies, and as a result his great work was written. It was the contention of the Puritans that the Church of England was far from perfect and stood in serious need of further reformation; that it was too strongly imbued with the spirit of Romanism; that there was no binding force in the traditions of men, but only in the words of the Bible, not only in respect to doctrine, but also of Church usages and discipline; and finally, that the whole form of government of the Episcopal Church should

be abolished. To these ideas Hooker was opposed, and his arguments are to prove that while the Scriptures as a standard of doctrine are perfect, they are not a rule of discipline or government; that because the disciples acted according to circumstances in their primitive age, their practice is not necessarily a law to the Church in succeeding ages; that the Scriptures may, and probably do, leave many things undecided; that the Church, being a society, like others, has the power to make what laws it deems necessary, providing they are in no way contradictory to Scriptural laws and commands; and finally, that in those circumstances where a rule of Scripture does not appear human authority should be recognized, within reasonable bounds.

He defends ceremonial usages in worship, an exceedingly distasteful thing to his Puritan opponents, in the dexterous manner following:

The end that is aimed at in setting down the outward form of all religious actions is the edification of the Church. Now men are edified when either their understanding is taught somewhat whereof in such actions it behoveth all men to consider, or when their hearts are moved with any affection suitable thereunto; when their minds are in any sort stirred up unto that reverence, devotion, attention, and due regard which in these cases seemeth requisite. Because therefore unto their purpose not only speech, but sundry sensible means besides have always been thought necessary, and especially those means which being object to the eye, the liveliest and most apprehensive sense of all other, have in that respect seemed the fittest to make a deep and a strong impression; from hence have risen not only a number of prayers,



readings, questionings, exhortings, but even of visible signs also; which being used in the performance of holy actions, are undoubtedly most effectual to open such matter, as men whom they know and remember carefully, must needs be a great deal the better informed to what effect such duties serve. We must not think but that there is some ground of reason even in nature, whereby it cometh to pass that no nation under heaven either doth or ever did suffer public actions which are of weight, whether they be civil and temporal or else spiritual and sacred, to pass without some visible solemnity: the very strangeness whereof and difference from that which is common doth cause popular eyes to observe and mark the same. Words, both because they are common, and do not so strongly move the fancy of man, are for the most part but slightly heard; and therefore with singular wisdom it hath been provided that the deeds of men which are made in the presence of witnesses should pass not only with words, but also with certain sensible actions, the memory of which is far more easy and durable than the memory of speech can be.

As an example of his eloquence, grandeur and noble, climactic style, we may use the oft-quoted lines from the first book, with its concluding paragraph. They treat of the nature and majesty of law:

That which hath greatest force in the very things we see, is notwithstanding itself oftentimes not seen. The stateliness of houses, the goodness of trees, when we behold them, delighteth the eye; but that foundation which beareth up the one, that root which ministereth unto the other nourishment and life, is in the bosom of the earth concealed; and if there be at any time occasion to search into it, such labor is then more necessary than pleasant, both to them which undertake it, and for the lookers on. In like manner the use and benefit of good laws; all that live under them may enjoy with delight

and comfort, albeit the grounds and first original causes from whence they have sprung be unknown, as to the greatest part of men they are. But when they who withdraw their obedience pretend that the laws which they should obey are corrupt and vicious, for better examination of their quality, it behoveth the very foundation and root, the highest well-spring and fountain of them, to be discovered. Which, because we are not oftentimes accustomed to do, when we do it, the pains we take are more needful a great deal than acceptable: and the matters which we handle seem, by reason of newness (till the mind grow better acquainted with them), dark, intricate, and unfamiliar.

And because the point about which we strive is the quality of our laws, our first entrance hereinto cannot better be made than with consideration of the nature of law in general.

All things that are have some operation not violent or casual. Neither doth anything ever begin to exercise the same without some fore-conceived end for which it worketh. And the end which it worketh for is not obtained, unless the work be also fit to obtain it by. For unto every end every operation will not serve. That which doth assign unto each thing the kind, that which doth moderate the force and power, that which doth appoint the form and measure of working, the same we term a *Law*. So that no certain end could ever be obtained unless the actions whereby it is obtained were regular, that is to say, made suitable, fit, and correspondent unto their end by some canon, rule, or law.

Moses, in describing the work of creation, attributeth speech unto God: "God said, let there be light; let there be a firmament; let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place; let the earth bring forth; let there be lights in the firmament of heaven." Was this only the intent of Moses, to signify the infinite greatness of God's power by the easiness of his accomplishing such effects, without travail, pain or labor? Surely it seemeth that Moses had herein beside this a

further purpose, namely, first to teach that God did not work as a necessary, but a voluntary agent, intending beforehand and decreeing with Himself that which did outwardly proceed from Him; secondly, to show that God did then institute a law natural to be observed by creatures, and therefore, according to the manner of laws, the institution thereof is described as being established by solemn injunction. His commanding those things to be which are and to be in such sort as they are, to keep that tenure and course which they do importeth the establishment of nature's law. This world's first creation, and the preservation since of things created, what is it but only so far forth a manifestation by execution, what the eternal law of God is concerning things natural? And as it cometh to pass in a kingdom rightly ordered, that after a law is once published it presently takes effect far and wide, all states framing themselves thereunto; even so let us think it fareth in the natural course of the world: since the time that God did first proclaim the edicts of His law upon it, heaven and earth have hearkened unto His voice, and their labor hath been to do His will. "He made a law for the rain, he gave his decree unto the sea, that the waters should not pass his commandment." Now, if nature should intermit her course, and leave altogether, though it were but for a while, the observation of her own laws; if those principal and mother elements of the world, whereof all things in this lower world are made, should lose the qualities which now they have; if the frame of that heavenly arch erected over our heads should loosen and dissolve itself; if celestial spheres should forget their wonted motions, and by irregular volubilities turn themselves any way as it might happen; if the prince of the lights of heaven, which now as a giant doth run its unwearyed course, should, as it were through a languishing faintness, begin to stand and to rest himself; if the moon should wander from her beaten way; the times and seasons of the year blend themselves by disordered and confused mixture; the winds breathe out their last gasp;

the clouds yield no rain; the earth be defeated of heavenly influence; the fruits of the earth pine away as children at the withered breasts of their mother, no longer able to yield them relief; what would become of man himself, whom these things now do all serve? See we not plainly that obedience of creatures unto the law of nature is the stay of the whole world? . . . .

Of law there can be no less acknowledged than that her seat is the bosom of God; her voice the harmony of the world. All things in heaven and earth do her homage; the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power. Both angels and men, and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy.

If his diction savors too much of Latinity, it should be remembered that ecclesiastical subjects were then usually discussed in Latin, and that his work is a scholarly production for scholarly people. Though his sentences are long and involved, there are no faults in the logic of his arguments; and, though his writings must be studied to be appreciated, yet they are dignified, eloquent and full of figurative expressions, though never what might be called poetic. Curiously enough, the reason and liberality of Hooker's views have in course of time made him more popular with the people against whom he wrote than with those for whom he argued. Nevertheless, he is still the standard authority in the English Church on these questions.

VI. SIR FRANCIS BACON. Viewed from all sides, Francis Bacon (1561-1626) is the greatest of the four great prose writers of the

Elizabethan Age, and second only to Shakespeare in the literature of his times. His father was an Elizabethan statesman of great parts, who for twenty years was Lord Keeper of the Seals. His mother, a well-educated woman and a zealous Calvinist, must have been a great influence on the early life of the philosopher. He was a most precocious child, and when a little past twelve entered Trinity College, Cambridge; at fourteen he left the university and commenced the study of law at Gray's Inn; and at fifteen he was sent as an attaché to the French court, where he remained for about three years. Called home at this time by the death of his father, he found little in the way of inheritance, but under protection of his uncle continued his studies, was admitted to the bar, and in 1584 entered Parliament. His progress was rapid, and under King James it was phenomenal. Advanced from one position to another, he did not stop until he had been appointed Lord High Chancellor of England and made Viscount St. Albans. We cannot here consider his political career, important as it may have been to England, but we may say in passing that it seems to have contained little of heart and to have been marked by great selfishness. Yet, whenever Bacon is accused of misdeeds or criticized for his actions, it appears quite possible to find some excuse for him, something to extenuate his acts. When it became his duty to prosecute Lord Essex, who had been his chief friend and patron, he not

only accepted the trust but carried it out apparently without regret until Essex was led to the block. This act, by many, is not considered admirable, but, rather, self-seeking.

But apparently selfishness was not his only fault. While still Lord Chancellor, his political enemies accused him of accepting bribes, and he was prosecuted for the act. In defense can be urged the fact that at that time it was actually customary for judges to receive presents of money from the litigants who appeared before them. These, however, were supposed not to be handed over until the trial was completed, but Bacon, who was extravagant and ostentatious, accepted money while cases were in process of trial, and when he was accused of this, confessed to numerous offenses. His disgrace was complete, and, tried before the peers, he was adjudged guilty and given sentence as follows:

1. That the Lord Viscount St. Albans, Lord Chancellor of England, shall undergo fine and ransom of forty thousand pounds.

2. That he shall be imprisoned in the Tower during the King's pleasure.

3. That he shall for ever be incapable of any office, place, or employment in the state or commonwealth.

4. That he shall never sit in Parliament, nor come within the verge of the Court.

This is the judgment and resolution of this High Court.

Not appearing to be disheartened by the severity of his sentence, he set to work on new projects; but, though the sentence was very

lightly carried out and he was subsequently pardoned, he never regained his power or influence. The years of his retirement were devoted to scientific study, and it was while stuffing the body of a dead fowl, to determine the antiseptic properties of snow, that he caught a severe cold, from which he died on the ninth of April, 1626. Bacon had been married to a woman of the middle classes, who for some reason, he shut out from the benefit of his will, so that the inference is that his domestic life was unhappy. In the will, however, he made one curious and oft-quoted legacy, which time has indeed charitably accepted, for he said, "For my name and memory, I leave it to men's charitable speeches and foreign nations and the next ages."

Among foreign nations and in all succeeding ages Bacon has been known and honored as the greatest philosopher and the most noted essayist of his time. His extraordinary intellect early saw the weakness of the system taught in the universities, and he set for himself the gigantic task of destroying the old and creating a new. His task was too great for the life of one man, but, as has been said, "he passed a sponge over the table of human knowledge and propounded enough of his new philosophy to place his name with those of Plato and Aristotle." His great philosophical work, the *Novum Organum*, was written in Latin, and so does not fall within the scope of our study. In fact, his title to the exalted position he holds

in English literature is dependent upon his little book of fifty-eight essays, which treat of a great variety of subjects. The volume is what Emerson calls "a little bible of earthly wisdom;" and Dugald Stewart, the famous Scotch metaphysician, declares, "They may be read from beginning to end in a few hours, and yet, after the twentieth perusal, one seldom fails to remark in them something unobserved before." Bacon's style is terse and meaty, but at the same time highly figurative, and the essays are full of short, pithy sentences that are easily remembered for the clarity of their style and the profundity of their thought. One does not read Bacon with profit for long at a time. He is a writer to pick up and read for a few moments and then to lay aside, for by that time any ordinary person will have found food for much thought. The essays are all short and on so great a variety of subjects that no two of them cover the same ground. They are so simple and perspicuous that any one can understand them, but so profound that the wisest student will pause to consider them. Every word has its meaning and is fitted to its place in the sentence so closely and so perfectly that it is almost impossible to alter the arrangement without sacrificing the thought. There is little to touch the feelings deeply, for sentiment has no place with him, but to the intellect he speaks in terms that cannot be misunderstood. In spite of its condensation, however, his style cannot be called plain, for it



abounds in striking analogies, brilliant figures and many allusions that show the breadth of his knowledge of the classics. His sentences are rhythmical and of the poetical type, though it is not known that he wrote more than one poem, and that one of little merit.

We have space for a few of the essays. The first is *Of Nature in Men*:

Nature is often hidden, sometimes overcome, seldom extinguished. Force maketh nature more violent in the return; doctrine and discourse maketh nature less importune; but custom only doth alter and subdue nature.

He that seeketh victory over his nature, let him not set himself too great nor too small tasks: for the first will make him dejected by often failings, and the second will make him a small proceeder, though by often prevailings; and at the first, let him practice with helps, as swimmers do with bladders, or rushes; but, after a time, let him practice with disadvantage, as dancers do with thick shoes; for it breeds great perfection, if the practice be harder than the use. Where nature is mighty, and therefore the victory hard, the degrees had need be, first to stay and arrest nature in time; like to him that would say over the four and twenty letters when he was angry, then to go less in quantity: as if one should, in forbearing wine, come from drinking healths to a draught at a meal; and lastly, to discontinue altogether: but if a man have the fortitude and resolution to enfranchise himself at once, that is the best:

“Optimus ille animi vindex laedentia pectus  
Vincula qui rupit, dedoluitque semel.”<sup>1</sup>

Neither is the ancient rule amiss, to bend nature as a wand to a contrary extreme, whereby to set it right; understanding it where the contrary extreme is no vice.

<sup>1</sup>He best asserts the freedom of his mind who bursts the chains that gall his breast and at the same time ceases to grieve.

Let not a man force a habit upon himself with a perpetual continuance; but with some intermission: for both the pause reinforceth the new onset; and if a man that is not perfect, be ever in practice, he shall as well practice his errors as his abilities, and induce one habit of both; and there is no means to help this but by seasonable intermission; but let not a man trust his victory over his nature too far; for nature will lie buried a great time, and yet revive upon the occasion, or temptation; like as it was with Aesop's damsel, turned from a cat to a woman, who sat very demurely at the board's end till a mouse ran before her: therefore, let a man either avoid the occasion altogether, or put himself often to it, that he may be little moved with it.

A man's nature is best perceived in privateness, for there is no affectation; in passion, for that putteth a man out of his precepts; and in a new case or experiment, for there custom leaveth him. They are happy men whose natures sort with their vocations; otherwise they may say, "Multum incola fuit anima mea,"<sup>2</sup> when they converse in those things they do not affect.

In studies, whatsoever a man commandeth upon himself, let him set hours for it; but whatsoever is agreeable to his nature, let him take no care for any set times; for his thoughts will fly to it of themselves, so as the spaces of other business or studies will suffice. A man's nature runs either to herbs or weeds; therefore let him seasonably water the one, and destroy the other.

### *On Friendship:*

It had been hard for him that spake it, to have put more truth and untruth together in few words, than in that speech, "Whosoever is delighted in solitude, is either a wild beast or a god;" for it is most true, that a natural and secret hatred and aversion toward society, in any man, hath somewhat of the savage beast; but it is most untrue, that it should have any character at all

<sup>2</sup>My soul has been long a sojourner—that is, never peaceful and content.

of the divine nature, except it proceed, not out of a pleasure in solitude, but out of a love and desire to sequester a man's self for a higher conversation: such as is found to have been falsely and feignedly in some of the heathens—as Epimenides, the Candian; Numa, the Roman; Empedocles, the Sicilian; and Apollonius, of Tyana; and truly, and really, in divers of the ancient hermits and holy fathers of the church. But little do men perceive what solitude is, and how far it extendeth; for a crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal where there is no love. The Latin adage meeteth with it a little: *Magna civitas, magna solitudo* [“Great city, great solitude”]; because in a great town friends are scattered, so that there is not that fellowship, for the most part, which is in less neighborhoods; but we may go further, and affirm most truly, that it is a mere and miserable solitude to want true friends, without which the world is but a wilderness; and, even in this sense also of solitude, whosoever, in the frame of his nature and affections, is unfit for friendship, he taketh it of the beast, and not from humanity.

A principal fruit of friendship is the ease and discharge of the fullness and swellings of the heart, which passions of all kinds do cause and induce. We know diseases of stoppings and suffocations are the most dangerous in the body, and it is not much otherwise in the mind: you may take sarza to open the liver, steel to open the spleen, flower of sulphur for the lungs, castoreum for the brain; but no receipt openeth the heart but a true friend, to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels and whatsoever lieth upon the heart to oppress it, in a kind of civil shrift or confession.

It is a strange thing to observe how high a rate great kings and monarchs do set upon this fruit of friendship whereof we speak—so great, as they purchase it many times at the hazard of their own safety and greatness; for princes, in regard of the distance of their fortune from that of their subjects and servants, cannot gather

this fruit, except, to make themselves capable thereof, they raise some persons to be, as it were, companions, and almost equals to themselves, which many times sorteth to inconvenience. The modern languages give unto such persons the name of favorites, or privadoes, as if it were matter of grace or conversation; but the Roman name attaineth the true use and cause thereof, naming them *participes curarum* [“participators in cares”]; for it is that which tieth the knot: and we see plainly that this hath been done, not by weak and passionate princes only, but by the wisest and most politic that ever reigned, who have oftentimes joined to themselves some of their servants, whom both themselves have called friends, and allowed others likewise to call them in the same manner, using the word which is received between private men. . . .

It is not to be forgotten what Comineus observeth of his first master, Duke Charles the Hardy—namely, that he would communicate his secrets with none; and, least of all, those secrets which troubled him most. Whereupon he goeth on, and saith, that towards his latter time, that closeness did impair and a little perish his understanding. Surely Comineus might have made the same judgment also, if it had pleased him, of his second master, Louis XI, whose closeness was indeed his tormentor. The parable of Pythagoras is dark, but true, *Cor ne edito*—eat not the heart. Certainly, if a man would give it a hard phrase, those that want friends to open themselves unto are cannibals of their own hearts; but one thing is most admirable—wherewith I will conclude this first fruit of friendship—which is, that this communicating of a man’s self to his friend, works two contrary effects, for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in halves; for there is no man that imparteth his joys to his friend, but he joyeth the more, and no man that imparteth his griefs to his friend, but he grieveth the less. So that it is, in truth, of operation upon a man’s mind of like virtue as the alchymists use to attribute to their stone for man’s body, that it worketh all contrary effects, but

still to the good and benefit of nature; but yet, without praying in aid of alchymists, there is a manifest image of this in the ordinary course of nature; for, in bodies, union strengtheneth and cherisheth any natural action, and, on the other side, weakeneth and dulleth any violent impression—and even so is it of minds.

The second fruit of friendship is healthful and sovereign for the understanding, as the first is for the affections; for friendship maketh indeed a fair day in the affections from storm and tempests, but it maketh daylight in the understanding, out of darkness and confusion of thoughts. Neither is this to be understood only of faithful counsel, which a man receiveth from his friend; but before you come to that, certain it is, that whosoever hath his mind fraught with many thoughts, his wits and understanding do clarify and break up, in the communicating and discoursing with another; he tosseth his thoughts more easily—he marshaleth them more orderly—he seeth how they look when they are turned into words—finally he waxeth wiser than himself; and that more by an hour's discourse than by a day's meditation. It was well said by Themistocles to the king of Persia, that speech was like cloth of Arras, opened and put abroad; whereby the imaginary doth appear in figure, whereas in thoughts they lie but as in packs. Neither is this second fruit of friendship, in opening the understanding, restrained only to such friends as are able to give a man counsel—they indeed are best—but even without that a man learneth of himself, and bringeth his own thoughts to light, and whetteth his wits as against a stone, which itself cuts not. In a word, a man were better relate himself to a statue or picture, than to suffer his thoughts to pass in smother.

Add now, to make this second fruit of friendship complete, that other point, which lieth more open, and falleth within vulgar observation—which is faithful counsel from a friend. Heraclitus saith well, in one of his enigmas, "Dry light is ever the best;" and certain it is, that the light that a man receiveth by counsel from

another, is drier and purer than that which cometh from his own understanding and judgment, which is ever infused and drenched in his affections and customs. So as there is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man gives himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and of a flatterer; for there is no such flatterer as is a man's self, and there is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend.

### *Of Beauty:*

Virtue is like a rich stone, best plain set; and surely virtue is best in a body that is comely, though not of delicate features, and that hath rather dignity of presence than beauty of aspect; neither is it almost seen, that very beautiful persons are otherwise of great virtue; as if nature were rather busy not to err, than in labor to produce excellency; and therefore they prove accomplished, but not of great spirit; and study rather behavior than virtue. But this holds not always; for Augustus Caesar, Titus Vespasianus, Philip le Bel of France, Edward IV of England, Alcibiades of Athens, Ismael, the sophy of Persia, were all high and great spirits, and yet the most beautiful men of their times. In beauty that of favor is more than that of color; and that of decent and gracious motion more than that of favor. That is the best part of beauty which a picture cannot express; no, nor the first sight of the life. There is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion. A man cannot tell whether Apelles or Albert Durer were the more trifler; whereof the one would make a personage by geometrical proportions: the other, by taking the best parts out of divers faces to make one excellent. Such personages, I think, would please nobody but the painter that made them: not but I think a painter may make a better face than ever was; but he must do it by a kind of felicity (as a musician that maketh an excellent air in music), and not by rule. A man shall see faces, that, if you examine them part by

part, you shall find never a good : and yet altogether do well. If it be true that the principal part of beauty is in decent motion, certainly it is no marvel though persons in years seem many times more amiable ; *pulchrum autumnus pulcher* ; for no youth can be comely but by pardon, and considering the youth as to make up the comeliness. Beauty is as summer fruits, which are easy to corrupt and cannot last ; and, for the most part, it makes a dissolute youth, and an age a little out of countenance ; but yet certainly again, if it light well, it maketh virtues shine, and vices blush.

### *On Revenge :*

Revenge is a kind of wild justice, which, the more man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out. For, as to the first wrong, it doth but offend the law ; but the revenge of that wrong, putteth the law out of office. Certainly, in taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy ; but in passing it over, he is his superior, for it is a prince's part to pardon. And Solomon, I am sure, saith : " It is the glory of a man to pass by an offense." That which is past, is gone and irrevocable, and wise men have enough to do with things present and to come. Therefore, they do but trifle with themselves that labor in past matters. There is no man doth a wrong for the wrong's sake, but thereby to purchase himself profit, or pleasure, or honor, or the like. Therefore, why should I be angry with a man for loving himself better than me ? And if any man should do wrong, merely out of ill nature, why ? Yet it is but like the thorn or briar, which prick and scratch, because they can do no other way. The most tolerable sort of revenge is for those wrongs which there is no law to remedy. But then let a man take heed the revenge be such as there is no law to punish, else a man's enemy is still beforehand, and it is two to one. Some, when they take revenge, are desirous the party should know whence it cometh. This is the more generous, for the delight seemeth to be, not so much in doing the hurt as in

making the party repent; but base and crafty cowards are like arrows that fly in the dark.

Cosmos, Duke of Florence, had a desperate saying against perfidious or neglecting friends, as if those wrongs were unpardonable. "You shall read," he said, "that we are commanded to forgive our enemies, but you never read that we are commanded to forgive our friends." And yet the spirit of Job was in better tune—"Shall we," saith he, "take good at God's hands, and not be content to take evil also?" And so of friends in a proportion.

This is certain, that a man that studieth revenge keeps his own wounds green, which otherwise would heal and do well. Public revenges are for the most part fortunate; but in private revenges it is not so. Nay, rather, vindictive persons live the life of witches, who, as they are mischievous, so end they unfortunate.

As examples of those thought-provoking sentences to which we alluded above, take the following, selected at random from various essays:

A man ought warily to begin charges, which once begun will continue: but in matters that return not, he may be more magnificent.

Money is like muck, not good except to be spread.

The pencil of the Holy Ghost hath labored more in describing the afflictions of Job than the felicities of Solomon.

Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man.

A little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion.



God Almighty first planted a garden.

Men fear Death as children fear to go in the dark.  
And as that natural fear in children is increased with  
tales, so is the other.

They are happy men whose natures sort with their  
vocations.

Certainly, virtue is like precious odors, most fragrant  
where they are incensed, or crushed.

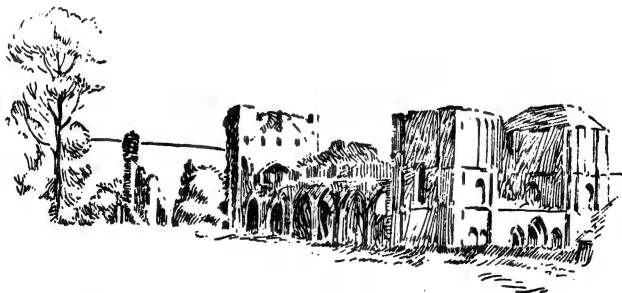
All rising to a great place is by a winding stair.

Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed,  
and some few to be chewed and digested.

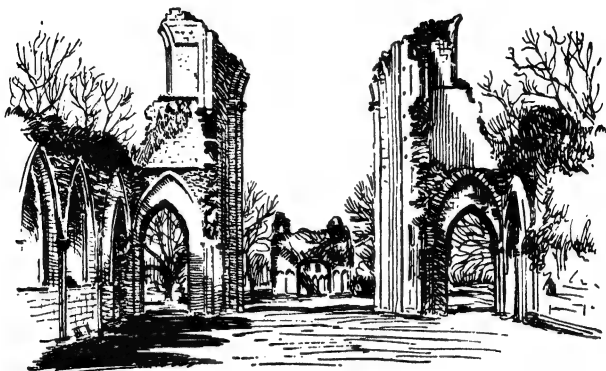
Suspensions among thoughts are like bats among birds,  
they ever fly to twilight.

Libraries are as the shrines where all the relics of the  
ancient saints, full of true virtue, and that without delu-  
sion or imposture, are preserved and reposed.

A mind fixed and bent upon somewhat that is good  
doth avert the dolours of death.



LLANTHONY ABBEY



## CHAPTER VII

### THE ELIZABETHAN AGE (CONTINUED)

EDMUND SPENSER

**B**IOGRAPHY. The first noteworthy successor of Chaucer, who wrote nearly two hundred years before, is Edmund Spenser, in whom the poetic power of the Elizabethan Age culminated. All the poetry that was written between the beginning of the fifteenth century and the end of the sixteenth was low in the scale when compared with the melodious lines and beautiful imagery of this great master of English versification. His early life is much in obscurity, and a great deal of uncertainty clings to many of the events of his later years. Born in London, probably in 1552, he was descended from a good family of Lancashire extraction, but Spenser's father was in the trade of cloth-making. Full of promise, the young Spenser

received a good education, and finally was admitted to the university in 1569. Here he served as a sizar, that is, one who waited upon the table and performed other menial tasks in payment for tuition and lodging. After his graduation, he retired for a time to the northern part of England, the original home of his family, where he fell deeply in love with the faithless "Rosalind," whose beauty he sings in *The Shepherd's Calendar*, the poem which, published anonymously in 1579, gave the author at once position and fame.

In London, Spenser is found as the intimate friend of the Earl of Leicester and his nephew, Philip Sidney, and for two years he mingled in the gayeties of the court. In 1580, as secretary, he followed Earl Grey to Ireland, and, it is assumed, performed his duties successfully, for he received considerable grants of land. In fact, he seems to have been too successful, for he was given large estates and required to remain there performing official duties, which interfered seriously with the development of his genius and deprived him of the leisure that such a man should have had. His residence, a small, dark tower, known as Kilcoman Castle, on the shore of a miniature lake and surrounded by timbered lands, lay near Limerick. Here he remained for eighteen years, with occasional visits to England and perhaps some excursions abroad. Finally, in September, 1598, he was made sheriff of the County of Cork, but at a most critical time. Ireland was in a

state of rebellion, and the insurgents, for a while successful, carried all before them. Kilcoman Castle was burned and sacked. From the tragic catastrophe Spenser and his wife and family barely escaped with their lives, and it is said on doubtful authority that one child perished in the castle. Of the wife of Spenser we know comparatively little, except that she survived him and was twice married after the poet's death. His children grew to maturity, and had families of their own. Though the family is now extinct in the male line, there are many who trace their descent to his daughter.

He was admired and patronized by Queen Elizabeth, who protected him against those who conspired against him, and Lord Essex offered him a home and the means of support when he was driven out of Ireland; but his bitter experiences and the privations he underwent produced their logical effect, and in January, 1599, he died in London.

The appreciation in which he was held is shown by the fact that he was buried, probably at the expense of Lord Essex, in Westminster Abbey, and that his body lies there near the tomb of Chaucer. The inscription on his tomb reads as follows:

Heare lyes (expecting the Second comminge of our Saviour CHRIST IESVS) the body of Edmond Spenser the Prince of Poets in his tyme whose Divine Spirrit needs noe othir wisse then the works which he left behinde him.

It is said that his funeral was largely attended, particularly by poets and other literary men, who cast their elegies and the pens with which they wrote them into the tomb. Elizabeth would have raised a monument to his memory, but was defeated in her good intention, which, however, was eventually carried out by the Countess of Dorset.

In character, Spenser was gentle, mild-mannered and most kindly in his treatment of those over whom he had supervision, and though acting as a soldier at times, his genius was in no sense military. Critics have often compared him with Camoens, both in the manner of his life and in the character of his writings. However, he was much more of a poet and less of a soldier than the great Portuguese.

II. WRITINGS. While at Cambridge, Spenser translated anonymously a number of poems, and when about twenty-seven years of age, as we have said, he produced his first noteworthy poem, *The Shepherd's Calendar*. His great allegory, *The Faerie Queene*, was commenced as early as 1579, the date of the first publication of *The Shepherd's Calendar*, but the first three books of the former were not published until 1590. The allegory was intended as a panegyric on Queen Elizabeth, and was naturally dedicated to her, as the author somewhat boastfully said, "to live with the eternity of her fame." In 1591 he returned to Ireland from an absence in England, and wrote under the title of *Colin Clout's Come Home*



*From Painting by Zuccaro, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York*

QUEEN ELIZABETH

1553-1603



*Again* an account of his journey, with pen portraits of his literary friends given under assumed names. In the same year, too, he published under the title *Complaints* a number of his early productions. Spenser's marriage to a beautiful Irish girl took place in 1594, and was celebrated in that noblest of lyrics, *The Epithalamion*. The course of his courtship, which lasted a year, is indicated in a charming sonnet-cycle, a kind of diary, to which he gave the name *Amoretti*. *The Prothalamion*, a beautiful poem which Coleridge praises for "the swanlike movement of the lines," takes for its theme a double marriage celebrated at the house of the Earl of Essex, where Spenser was then staying. All his other poems, however, are eclipsed by *The Faerie Queene*, a wonderful work, ambitious in conception and marvelously carried out as far as it goes, though never completed.

III. GENIUS AND STYLE. Spenser's imagination was surprisingly rich and luxuriant, so that his creation of scenes and incidents is infinite. His verse is surpassingly rich and melodious, while his meter has a rhythm and a continuous sweetness not to be found elsewhere. His appreciation of beauty and his power of portraying it were extraordinary. Widely read, freely acquainted with all literary treasures of the past, his mind was great enough to include them all and give them imperishable form. Shakespeare scarcely excelled him in the richness of his fancy.



Spenser exhibited a fondness for details, which constitutes one of the chief defects of his work, and frequently there are passages which are wearisome because of this very fact. Brevity, force and self-restraint are unknown in Spenser's writing, and their absence constitutes its chief weakness. Moreover, his ingenious and subtle intellect continually tempted him to make obscure allusions with dark meanings, so that the course of his allegory is often difficult to follow. From the time of the publication of *The Shepherd's Calendar* to the end of his career, this trait was the subject of criticism by his best friends. Though only six of the projected twelve books of *The Faerie Queene* were written, it is still one of the longest poems in the language, and it is doubtful if its popularity would have been increased or its influence extended had it been completed. The first three books are by far the best.

To Spenser, moreover, must be given credit for the invention of the stanza which bears his name and which has been the form adopted by many great poets since. It is the meter in which Burns wrote his *Cotter's Saturday Night*, Shelley his *Revolt of Islam*, and Byron his *Childe Harold*. The Spenserian stanza, based upon the *ottava rima*, made so popular in Italian poetry by Tasso and Ariosto, adds one line to the eight regular iambic pentameters, while the ninth line is an Alexandrine, or iambic hexameter, which closes the stanza with a melodious, lingering cadence.

The only way in which we may obtain a just appreciation of Spenser is by reading his various poems.

IV. “THE SHEPHERD’S CALENDAR.” As we have already said, it was the disappointment of Spenser in his love affair with “Rosalind” that was responsible for the production of *The Shepherd’s Calendar*, a pastoral containing a variety of measures distinguished for their harmony, and admirable in every respect. The *Calendar* is divided into twelve eclogues, or short idyllic poems, one for each month of the year. Shepherds, after the manner of the ancient classic pastoral, gather and discuss love, politics, religion and other subjects in a manner which seems rather tiresome to modern readers, who have long since ceased to assign such subjects to country lads and lassies. However, the state of poetry in that day, and the fact that religion especially was so vital a topic, undoubtedly added to the popularity of the piece. Moreover, in that epoch there seemed no anachronism in shepherds like those of Theocritus, for romance was in the very air, and people were not critical of the extraordinary and absurd.

The dedication on the title page of the poem is “To the noble and vertvous Gentleman most worthy of all titles, both of learning and chaulrie, M. Philip Sidney.”

A large portion of the eclogues is given up to the complaints of the unsuccessful lover, but the poet finds opportunity to praise other

things, as, for instance, in the following stanzas, which find in wine a source of the poet's inspiration:

All otherwise the state of Poet stands;  
For lordly love is such a tyrant fell,  
That where he rules all power he doth expel;  
The vaunted verse a vacant head demands,  
Ne wont with crabbed care the Muses dwell:  
Unwisely weaves, that takes two webs in hands.

Whoever casts to compass weighty prize,  
And thinks to throw out thundering words of threat,  
Let pour in lavish cups and thrifty bits of meat,  
For Bacchus' fruit is friend to Phoebus wise;  
And when with wine the brain begins to sweat,  
The numbers flow as fast as spring doth rise.

Thou kenst not, Percy, how the rhyme should rage,  
O! if my temples were distained with wine,  
And girt in garlands of wild ivy twine,  
How I could rear the Muse on stately stage,  
And teach her tread aloft in buskin fine,  
With quaint Bellona in her equipage!

The modest and gentle Spenser, however, had in his soul some confidence in the merit of his composition, if we may judge by the following lines, which he utters through the lips of one of his characters:

Colin, to hear thy rhymes and rondelays,  
Which thou wert wont on wasteful hills to sing,  
I more delight than lark in summer days,  
Whose echo made the neighbor groves to ring,  
And taught the birds, which in the lower spring  
Did shroud in shady leaves from sunny rays,  
Frame to thy song their cheerful chirruping,  
Or hold their peace for shame of thy sweet lays.

I saw Calliope with Muses mo,  
 Soon as thy oaten pipe began to sound,  
 Their ivory lutes and tamburins forego,  
 And from the fountains where they sat around  
 Run after hastily thy silver sound;  
 But, when they came where thou thy skill didst show,  
 They drew aback, as half with shame confound,  
 Shepherd, to see them in their art outgo.

V. “AMORETTI.” We give below three of the sonnets from the sequence of eighty-eight, which, as we have said, recorded Spenser’s courtship of Elizabeth Boyle:

Ye tradeful merchants that with weary toil  
 Do seek most precious things to make your gain,  
 And both the Indias of their treasures spoil,  
 What needeth you to seek so far in vain?  
 For lo, my love doth in herself contain  
 All this world’s riches that may far be found:  
 If sapphires, lo, her eyes be sapphires plain;  
 If rubies, lo, her lips be rubies sound;  
 If pearls, her teeth be pearls, both pure and round;  
 If ivory, her forehead ivory ween;  
 If gold, her locks are finest gold on ground;  
 If silver, her fair hands are silver sheen.  
 But that which fairest is, but few behold—  
 Her mind adorned with virtues manifold.

What guile is this, that those her golden tresses  
 She doth attire under a net of gold,  
 And with sly skill so cunningly them dresses  
 That which is gold or hair may scarce be told?  
 Is it that men’s frail eyes, which gaze too bold,  
 She may entangle in that golden snare,  
 And, being caught, may craftily enfold  
 Their weaker hearts, which are not well aware?  
 Take heed, therefore, mine eyes, how ye do stare  
 Henceforth too rashly on that guileful net,

In which if ever ye entrapped are,  
 Out of her bands ye by no means shall get.  
 Fondness it were for any, being free,  
 To covet fetters, though they golden be!

After long storms' and tempests' sad assay,  
 Which hardly I endured heretofore,  
 In dread of death, and dangerous dismay,  
 With which my silly bark was tossed sore;  
 I do at length descry the happy shore,  
 In which I hope ere long for to arrive:  
 Fair soil it seems from far, and fraught with store  
 Of all that dear and dainty is alive.  
 Most happy he! that can at last atchive  
 The joyous safety of so sweet a rest;  
 Whose least delight sufficeth to deprive  
 Remembrance of all pains which him opprest,  
     All pains are nothing in respect of this;  
     All sorrows short that gain eternal bliss.

VI. "EPITHALAMION." The *Epithalamion*, an exquisitely beautiful lyric and the finest written by Spenser, is considered the greatest marriage song in the language. We have space for but a few stanzas:

Wake now, my love, awake; for it is time;  
 The rosy morn long since left Tithon's bed,  
 All ready to her silver coach to climb;  
 And Phoebus 'gins to show his glorious head.  
 Hark! how the cheerful birds do chant their lays,  
 And carol of Love's praise.  
 The merry lark her matins sings aloft;  
 The thrush replies; the mavis descant plays;  
 The ouzel shrills; the ruddock warbles soft;  
 So goodly all agree, with sweet consent,  
 To this day's merriment.  
 Ah! my dear love, why do you sleep thus long,

When meeter were that you should now awake,  
T' await the coming of your joyous make,  
And harken to the birds' love-learned song,  
The dewy leaves among!  
For they of joy and pleasance to you sing,  
That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring.

Open the temple gates unto my love,  
Open them wide that she may enter in,  
And all the posts adorn as doth behove,  
And all the pillars deck with garlands trim,  
For to receive this saint with honor due,  
That cometh in to you.  
With trembling steps, and humble reverence,  
She cometh in, before the Almighty's view;  
Of her, ye virgins, learn obedience,  
When so ye come into those holy places,  
To humble your proud faces;  
Bring her up to the high altar, that she may  
The sacred ceremonies there partake,  
The which do endless matrimony make;  
And let the roaring organs loudly play  
The praises of the Lord in lively notes;  
The whiles, with hollow throats,  
The choristers the joyous anthem sing,  
That all the woods may answer, and their echo ring.

Behold, whiles she before the altar stands,  
Hearing the holy priest that to her speaks,  
And blesseth her with his two happy hands,  
How the red roses flush up in her cheeks,  
And the pure snow, with goodly vermeil stain,  
Like crimson dyed in grain;  
That even the angels, which continually  
About the sacred altar do remain,  
Forget their service, and about her fly,  
Oft peeping in her face, that seems more fair  
The more they on it stare.  
But her sad eyes, still fastened on the ground,

Are governed with goodly modesty,  
That suffers not one look to glance awry,  
Which may let in a little thought unsound.  
Why blush ye, love, to give to me your hand,  
The pledge of all our band?  
Sing, ye sweet angels, Alleluya sing,  
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

VII. "THE FAERIE QUEENE." To obtain a standard of comparison for Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, we must go to the continent and consider his work with that of his great contemporaries, Tasso and Camoens. Each attempted an epic in which to dignify and praise the work of his sovereign. The continental poets succeeded, though the beauty of their masterpieces is marred by their extreme adulation and the constant recurrence to the living characters whom they represented in their allegorical passages. On the other hand, Spenser, while he wrote much more beautiful and melodious verse, failed to produce an epic because of his lack of narrative power; likewise he failed in making modern readers believe in the reality of his praise, failed because of the indirection of his work and his neglect to personify the Queen herself. There is perhaps a closer analogy between him and Ariosto and Boiardo than between the two poets whom we first mentioned.

We would not know that the Glorianna of *The Faerie Queene* was intended for Elizabeth if he had not told us so, for she appears only by allusion in the introduction to the several

books and never as a character in the poem itself, though there are numerous figures which from time to time partake of the character of Elizabeth, even to the extent of entering into adventures which contain incidents paralleling some which happened to her. There was undoubtedly a reason for this in the fact that the English are different from the Italians, and because of his position as a courtier and a defender of the kingdom in one of its most vulnerable western provinces. Taking these things into consideration, the modern reader may well content himself with reading the poem as a romance and refraining from trying to trace its relationship to Elizabeth and her reign.

*The Faerie Queene* was an ambitious undertaking. Spenser intended to celebrate in twelve books the great moral virtues which he saw perfected in the person of King Arthur, the hero of the poem. Every book was to be connected with the adventures of one knight from the Round Table, and each knight was to be the allegorical representative of one of the virtues. Thus, the first book contains the legend of the Knight of the Red Cross, Holiness; the second, the legend of Sir Guyon, Temperance; the third, of Britomartis (the Queen), Chastity. These were the three books first published, and they, as we have seen, were followed by three others, really much inferior. It has been contended that the poet completed his work, but if he did so, nothing but a tri-



fling fragment remains, though it is a tradition that either in the destruction of Kilcoman Castle or by the carelessness of a servant in crossing the sea from Ireland to England, the remaining six books were lost. It is altogether probable, though, that only the six were written, for his position in those tempestuous days of Ireland's history was not conducive to study, and the only wonder is that he was able to accomplish what he did. The adventures of his knights are really reflections from the stormy scenes about him, and the beauty of his description may in a large measure be the effect of the loveliness of the natural scenery he found in and near his home in Southern Ireland.

Besides the allegory mentioned, a second one runs through the poem, for the knights and other characters, besides representing the virtues and various human qualities, are prominent personages of the day, acting under such thin disguises that it was then quite possible to identify them. It was by this indirect means that the poet hoped to recommend himself to the noble and influential persons who could give him preferment. "In all humilitie" he "dedicates, presents and consecrates these his labors" "to the most high, mighty and magnificent Empresse, renowned for pietie, vertue and all gracious government, Elizabeth." To the poem was prefixed an introductory letter addressed to Sir Walter Raleigh, in which the details of his plan and parts of the allegory

were explained. A few sentences from this introduction show best his intentions:

The generall end, therefore, of all the booke is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline.—I labour to poratraiet in Arthure, before he was King, the image of a brave knight, perfected in the twelve morall vertues, as Aristotle hath devised.—In that Faerie Queene I meane glory in my generall intention, but in my particular I conceive the most excellent and glorious person of our soveraine the Queene, and her kingdome in Faerie land.

The skill with which Spenser could describe magnificent pageantry in the soft, rich measures of true poetry is illustrated by the stanzas following:

Soon as she up out of her deadly fit  
 Arose, she bade her chariot to be brought;  
 And all her sisters that with her did sit  
 Bade eke attonce their chariots to be sought  
 Tho full of bitter grief and pensive thought,  
 She to her wagon clomb; clomb all the rest,  
 And forth together went with sorrow fraught.  
 The waves, obedient to their behest,  
 Them yielded ready passage, and their rage surceased.

Great Neptune stood amazed at their sight,  
 While on his broad round back they softly slid,  
 And eke himself mourned at their mournful plight,  
 Yet wist not what their wailing meant, yet did,  
 For great compassion of their sorrow bid  
 His mighty waters to them buxom be;  
 Eftsoons the roaring billows still abid,  
 And all the grisly monsters of the sea  
 Stood gaping at their gait, and wondered them to see.

A team of dolphins ranged in array  
 Drew the smooth chariot of sad Cymoent:

They were all taught by Tritons to obey  
To the long reins at her commandement:  
As swift as swallows on the waves they went,  
That their broad flaggy fins no foam did rear,  
Nor bubbling roundel they behind them sent.  
The rest of other fishes drawen were,  
Which with their finny oars the swelling sea did shear.

Soon as they bin arrived upon the brim  
Of the rich strand, their chariots they forlore,  
And let their tamed fishes softly swim  
Along the margent of the foamy shore,  
Lest they their fins should bruise, and surbate sore  
Their tender feet upon the stony ground:  
And coming to the place where all in gore  
And crudely blood enwallowed they found  
The luckless Marinell lying in deadly swound.

The best passages from *The Faerie Queene* are rendered long by the poet's great attention to detail, but the following brief description of the gloomy cave of Mammon is one of his choicest:

The house's form within was rude and strong,  
Like an huge cave hewn out of rocky clift,  
From whose rough vault the ragged breaches hong,  
Embossed with massy gold of glorious gift,  
And with rich metal loaded every rift,  
That heavy ruin they did seem to threat;  
And over them Arachne high did lift  
Her cunning web, and spread her subtle net,  
Ennrapt in foule smoke and clouds more black than jet.

Both roof and floor and walls were all of gold,  
But overgrown with dust and old decay,  
And hid in darkness; that none could behold  
The view thereof; for light of cheerful day  
Did never in that house itself display

But a faint shadow of uncertain light;  
 Such as a lamp, whose life does fade away,  
 Or as the Moon, clothed with cloudy night,  
 Does show to him that walks in fear and sad affright.

In all that room was nothing to be seen  
 But huge great iron chests, and coffers strong,  
 All barred with double bands, that none could ween  
 Them to efforce by violence or wrong.  
 On every side they placed were along;  
 But all the ground with skulls was scattered.  
 And dead men's bones, which round about were  
 flong;  
 Whose lives, it seemed, whilom there were shed,  
 And their vile carcases now left unburied.

Contrast with the preceding the following  
 splendid description of the glories of the House  
 of Pride:

High above all a cloth of State was spread,  
 And a rich throne, as bright as sunny Day;  
 On which there sate, most brave embellished  
 With royal robes and gorgeous array,  
 A maiden Queen that shone as Titan's ray  
 In glistening gold and peerless precious stone;  
 Yet her bright blazing beauty did assay  
 To dim the brightness of her glorious throne  
 As envying herself that too exceeding shone:

Exceeding shone, like Phoebus' fairest child,  
 That did presume his father's fiery wain,  
 And flaming mouths of steeds, unwonted wilde,  
 Through highest heaven with weaker hand to rein:  
 Proud of such glory and advancement vain,  
 While flashing beams do dim his feeble eyen,  
 He leaves the welkin way most beaten plain,  
 And rapt with whirling wheels, inflames the skyen,  
 With fire not made to burn, but fairly for to shine.

So proud she shined in her princely state,  
Looking to heaven, for earth she did disdain,  
And sitting high for lowly she did hate:  
Lo! underneath her scornful feet was lain  
A dreadful Dragon with a hideous train;  
And in her hand she held a mirror bright,  
Wherein her face she often viewed fair,  
And in her self-loved semblance took delight,  
For she was wondrous fair, as any living wight.

But let us quote a passage or two from more competent critics concerning Spenser's style before we proceed to longer extracts from the poem. Taine says:

No modern is more like Homer. Like Homer, he is always simple and clear; he makes no leaps, he omits no argument, he robs no word of its primitive and ordinary meaning, he preserves the natural sequence of ideas. Like Homer again, he is redundant, ingenuous, even childish. He says everything, he puts down reflections which we have made beforehand; he repeats without limit his grand ornamental epithets. We can see that he beholds objects in a beautiful uniform light, with infinite detail; that he wishes to show all this detail, never fearing to see his happy dream change or disappear; that he traces its outline with a regular movement, never hurrying or slackening. He is even a little prolix, too unmindful of the public, too ready to lose himself and dream about the things he beholds. His thought expands in vast, repeated comparisons, like those of the old Ionic bard.

Hazlitt writes:

There is an originality, richness, and variety in his allegorical personages and fictions, which almost vie with the splendor of ancient mythology. If Ariosto transports us into the regions of romance, Spenser's poetry is all fairyland. In Ariosto we walk upon the ground, in a company gay, fantastic, and adventurous enough. In

Spenser we wander in another world among ideal beings. The poet takes and lays us in the lap of a lovelier nature, by the sound of softer streams, among greener hills and fairer valleys.

But we must stop with a final quotation from Leigh Hunt:

If you love poetry well enough to enjoy it for its own sake, let no evil reports of his *allegory* deter you from an acquaintance with Spenser, for great will be your loss. His allegory itself is but one part allegory and nine parts beauty and enjoyment. . . . His versification is almost perpetual honey. . . . He has had more idolatry and imitation from his brethren than all the rest put together. . . . Milton studied and used him, calling him the “sage and serious Spenser.” . . . Cowley said he became a poet by reading him. Dryden claimed him for a master. Pope said he read him with as much pleasure when he was old as when he was young. Collins and Gray loved him; Thomson, Shenstone and a host of inferior writers expressly imitated him; Burns, Byron, Shelley and Keats made use of his stanza; Coleridge eulogized him; and he is as dear to the best living poets as he was to their predecessors.

The first six books consist each of twelve long cantos, the first containing in all more than fifty-five hundred lines. This unusual length makes it impossible to give in brief any comprehensive idea of its wealth of incident and its unnumbered beauties. The best that can be done is to quote a few of the most famous adventures, which naturally will be taken from the first three books.

*The Adventure of the Red Cross Knight with the Dragon* is from the first canto of the first book:

A gentle Knight was pricking on the plaine,  
Ycladd in mightie armes and silver shielde,  
Wherein old dints of deepe woundes did remaine,  
The cruell markes of many a bloody felde;  
Yet armes till that time did he never wield.  
His angry steede did chide his foaming bitt,  
As much disdayning to the curbe to yield:  
Full jolly knight he seemd, and faire did sitt,  
As one for knightly giusts and fierce encounters fitt.

And on his brest a bloodie Crosse he bore,  
The deare remembrance of his dying Lord,  
For whose sweete sake that glorious badge he wore,  
And dead, as living, ever him ador'd:  
Upon his shield the like was also scor'd,  
For soveraine hope which in his helpe he had.  
Right faithfull true he was in deede and word,  
But of his cheere did seeme too solemne sad;  
Yet nothing did he dread, but ever was ydrad.

Upon a great adventure he was bond,  
That greatest Gloriana to him gave,  
(That greatest Glorious Queene of Faery lond)  
To winne him worshippe, and her grace to have,  
Which of all earthly thinges he most did crave:  
And ever as he rode his hart did earne  
To prove his puissance in battell brave  
Upon his foe, and his new force to learne,  
Upon his foe, a Dragon horrible and stearne.

A lovely Ladie rode him faire beside,  
Upon a lowly Asse more white than snow,  
Yet she much whiter; but the same did hide  
Under a vele, that wimpled was full low;  
And over all a blacke stole shee did throw:  
As one that inly mournd, so was she sad,  
And heavie sate upon her palfrey slow;  
Seemed in heart some hidden care she had,  
And by her, in a line, a milkewhite lambe she lad.

So pure and innocent, as that same lambe,  
 She was in life and every vertuous lore;  
 And by descent from Royall lynage came  
 Of ancient Kinges and Queenes, that had of yore  
 Their scepters stretcht from East to Westernne shore,  
 And all the world in their subjection held;  
 Till that infernall feend with foule uprore  
 Forwasted all their land, and them expeld;  
 Whom to avenge she had this Knight from far compeld.

Behind her farr away a Dwarfe did lag,  
 That lasie seemd, in ever being last,  
 Or wearied with bearing of her bag  
 Of needments at his backe. Thus as they past,  
 The day with cloudes was suddeine overcast,  
 And angry Jove an hideous storme of raine  
 Did poure into his Lemans lap so fast,  
 That everie wight to shrowd it did constrain;  
 And this faire couple eke to shroud themselves were fain.

Enforst to seeke some covert nigh at hand,  
 A shadie grove not farr away they spide,  
 That promist ayde the tempest to withstand;  
 Whose loftie trees, yclad with sommers pride,  
 Did spread so broad, that heaven's light did hide,  
 Not perceable with power of any starr:  
 And all within were pathes and alleies wide,  
 With footing worne, and leading inward farr.  
 Faire harbour that them seems, so in they entred ar.

And forth they passe, with pleasure forward led,  
 Joying to heare the birds sweete harmony,  
 Which, therein shrouded from the tempest dred,  
 Seemd in their song to scorne the cruell sky.  
 Much can they praise the trees so straight and hy,  
 The sayling Pine; the Cedar proud and tall;  
 The vine-propp Elme; the Poplar never dry;  
 The builder Oake, sole king of forrests all;  
 The Aspine good for staves; the Cypresse funerall;



The Laurell, meed of mightie Conquerours  
 And Poets sage; the Firre that weepeth still:  
 The Willow, worne of forlorne Paramours;  
 The Eugh, obedient to the benders will;  
 The Birch for shaftes; the Sallow for the mill;  
 The Mirrhe sweete-bleeding in the bitter wound;  
 The warlike Beech; the Ash for nothing ill;  
 The fruitfull Olive; and the Platane round;  
 The carver Holme; the Maple seeldom inward sound.

Led with delight, they thus beguile the way,  
 Untill the blustering storme is overblowne;  
 When, weening to returne whence they did stray,  
 They cannot finde that path, which first was showne,  
 But wander too and fro in waies unknowne,  
 Furthest from end then, when they neerst weene,  
 That makes them doubt their wits be not their owne:  
 So many pathes, so many turnings seene,  
 That which of them to take in diverse doubt they been.

At last resolving forward still to fare,  
 Till that some end they finde, or in or out,  
 That path they take that beaten seemd most bare,  
 And like to lead the labyrinth about;  
 Which when by tract they hunted had throughout,  
 At length it brought them to a hollowe cave  
 Amid the thickest woods. The Champion stout  
 Eftsoones dismounted from his courser brave,  
 And to the Dwarfe a while his needlesse spere he gave.

"Be well aware," quoth then that Ladie milde,  
 "Least suddaine mischief ye too rash provoke:  
 The danger hid, the place unknowne and wilde,  
 Breedes dreadfull doubts. Oft fire is without smoke,  
 And perill without show: therefore your stroke,  
 Sir Knight, with-hold, till further tryall made."  
 "Ah Ladie" (sayd he), "shame were to revoke  
 The forward footing for an hidden shade:  
 Vertue gives her selfe light through darknesse for to  
 wade."

“Yea but” (quoth she) “the perill of this place  
I better wot then you: though nowe too late  
To wish you backe returne with foule disgrace,  
Yet wisdome warnes, whilest foot is in the gate,  
To stay the steppe, ere forced to retrate.  
This is the wandring wood, this *Errours* den,  
A monster vile, whom God and man does hate:  
Therefore I read beware.” “Fly, fly!” (quoth then  
The fearfull Dwarfe) “this is no place for living men.”

But, full of fire and greedy hardiment,  
The youthfull Knight could not for ought be staide;  
But forth unto the darksom hole he went,  
And looked in: his glistring armor made  
A little glooming light, much like a shade;  
By which he saw the ugly monster plaine,  
Halfe like a serpent horribly displaide,  
But th’ other halfe did womans shape retaine,  
Most lothsom, filthie, foule, and full of vile disdaine.

And, as she lay upon the durtie ground,  
Her huge long taile her den all overspred,  
Yet was in knots and many boughtes upwound,  
Pointed with mortall sting. Of her there bred  
A thousand yong ones, which she dayly fed,  
Sucking upon her poisonous dugs; each one  
Of sundrie shapes, yet all ill-favored:  
Soone as that uncouth light upon them shone,  
Into her mouth they crept, and suddain all were gone.

Their dam upstart out of her den effraide,  
And rushed forth, hurling her hideous taile  
About her cursed head; whose folds displaid  
Were stretcht now forth at length without entraile  
She lookt about, and seeing one in mayle,  
Armed to point, sought backe to turne againe;  
For light she hated as the deadly bale,  
Ay wont in desert darkness to remaine,  
Where plaine none might her see, nor she see <sup>an</sup> any plaine.

Which when the valiant Elfe perceiv'd he leapt  
 As Lyon fierce upon the flying pray,  
 And with his trenchand blade her boldly kept  
 From turning backe, and forced her to stay:  
 Therewith enrag'd she loudly gan to bray,  
 And turning fierce her speckled taile advaunst,  
 Threatning her angrie sting, him to dismay;  
 Who, naught aghast, his mightie hand enhaunst:  
 The stroke down from her head unto her shoulder glaunst.

Much daunted with that dint her sence was dazd;  
 Yet kindling rage her selfe she gathered round,  
 And all atonce her beastly bodie raizd  
 With doubled forces high above the ground;  
 Tho, wrapping up her wrethed sterne arownd,  
 Lept fierce upon his shield, and her huge traine  
 All suddenly about his body wound,  
 That hand or foot to stirr he strove in vaine.  
 God helpe the man so wrapt in Errours endlesse traine!

His lady, sad to see his sore constraint,  
 Cride out, "Now, now, Sir Knight, shew what ye bee;  
 Add faith unto your force and be not faint;  
 Strangle her, els she sure will strangle thee."  
 That when he heard, in great perplexitie,  
 His gall did grate for grieve and high disdaine;  
 And knitting all his force, got one hand free,  
 Wherewith he grypt her gorge with so great paine,  
 That soon to loose her wicked bands did her constraine.

Therewith she spewd out of her filthie maw  
 A flood of poyson horrible and blacke,  
 Wherewith full of great lumps of flesh and gobbets raw,  
 His rich stunck so vildly, that it forst him slacke  
 Her vengrasping hold, and from her turne him backe.  
 With loamit full of bookes and papers was,  
 And creeperly frogs and toades, which eyes did lacke,  
 Her filthie creeping sought way in the weedy gras:  
 Her filthie parbreake all the place defiled has.

As when old father Nilus gins to swell  
 With timely pride above the Aegyptian vale  
 His fattie waves doe fertile slime outwell,  
 And overflow each plaine and lowly dale:  
 But, when his later spring gins to avale,  
 Huge heapes of mudd he leaves, wherein there breed  
 Ten thousand kindes of creatures, partly male  
 And partly femall, of his fruitful seed;  
 Such ugly monstrous shapes elswher may no man reed.

The same so sore annoyed has the knight,  
 That, welnigh choked with the deadly stinke,  
 His forces faile, ne can no lenger fight;  
 Whose corage when the feend perceivd to shrink,  
 She poured forth out of her hellish sinke  
 Her fruitful cursed spawne of serpents small,  
 Deformed monsters, fowle, and blacke as inke,  
 Which swarming all about his legs did crall,  
 And him encombred sore, but could not hurt at all.

As gentle shepheard in sweete eventide,  
 When ruddy Phebus gins to welke in west,  
 High on an hill, his flocke to vewen wide,  
 Markes which doe byte their hasty supper best;  
 A cloud of cumbrous gnattes doe him molest,  
 All striving to infixe their feeble stinges,  
 That from their noyance he no where can rest;  
 But with his clownish hands their tender wings  
 He brusheth oft, and oft doth mar their murmurings.

Thus ill bestedd, and fearefull more of shame  
 Then of the certeine perill he stood in,  
 Halfe furious unto his foe he came,  
 Resolvd in minde all suddenly to win,  
 Or soone to lose, before he once would lin;  
 And stroke at her with more then manly force,  
 That from her body, full of filthie sin,  
 He raft her hatefull heade without remorse:  
 A streame of cole-black blood forth gushed from her corse.

His Lady, seeing all that chaunst from farre,  
Approcht in hast to greet his victorie;  
And saide, "Faire knight, borne under happie starre,  
Who see your vanquisht foes before you lye,  
Well worthie be you of that Armory,  
Wherein ye have great glory wonne this day,  
And proof'd your strength on a strong enimie,  
Your first adventure: many such I pray,  
And henceforth ever wish that like succeed it may!"

Then mounted he upon his Steede againe,  
And with the Lady backward sought to wend.  
That path he kept which beaten was most plaine,  
Ne ever would to any byway bend,  
But still did follow one unto the end,  
The which at last out of the wood them brought.  
So forward on his way (with God to frend)  
He passed forth, and new adventure sought:  
Long way he traueiled before he heard of ought.

At length they chaunst to meet upon the way  
An aged Sire, in long blacke weedes yclad,  
His feete all bare, his beard all hoarie gray,  
And by his belt his booke he hanging had:  
Sober he seemde, and very sagely sad,  
And to the ground his eyes were lowly bent,  
Simple in shew, and voide of malice bad;  
And all the way he prayed as he went,  
And often knockt his brest, as one that did repent.

He faire the knight saluted, louting low,  
Who faire him quited, as that courteous was;  
And after asked him, if he did know  
Of straunge adventures, which abroad did pas.  
"Ah! my dear sonne," (quoth he) "how should, alas!  
Silly old man, that lives in hidden cell,  
Bidding his beades all day for his trespas,  
Tydings of warre and worldly trouble tell?  
With holy father sits not with such things to mell.

“But if of daunger, which hereby doth dwell,  
And homebredd evil ye desire to heare,  
Of a straunge man I can you tidings tell,  
That wasteth all this countrie, farre and neare.”  
“Of such,” (saide he,) “I chiefly doe inquere,  
And shall thee well rewarde to shew the place,  
In which that wicked wight his dayes doth weare;  
For to all knighthood it is foule disgrace,  
That such a cursed creature lives so long a space.”

“Far hence” (quoth he) “in wastfull wildernessse  
His dwelling is, by which no living wight  
May ever passe, but thorough great distresse.”  
“Now,” (saide the Ladie,) “draweth toward night,  
And well I wrote, that of your later fight  
Ye all forwearied be; for what so strong,  
But, wanting rest, will also want of might?  
The sunne, that measures heaven all day long,  
At night doth baite his steedes the Ocean waves emong.

“Then with the Sunne take, Sir, your timely rest,  
And with new day new worke at once begin:  
Untroubled night, they say, gives counsell best.”  
“Right well, Sir knight, ye have advised bin,”  
Quoth then that aged man: “the way to win  
Is wisely to advise; now day is spent:  
Therefore with me ye may take up your in  
For this same night.” The knight was well content;  
So with that godly father to his home they went.

A little lowly Hermitage it was,  
Downe in a dale, hard by a forest's side,  
Far from resort of people that did pas  
In traveill to and froe; a litle wyde  
There was an holy chappell edifyde,  
Wherein the Hermite dewly wont to say  
His holy thinges each morne and eventyde:  
Thereby a christall streame did gently play,  
Which from a sacred fountaine welled forth alway.

Arrived there, the litle house they fill,  
Ne looke for entertainment where none was;  
Rest is their feast, and all thinges at their will:  
The noblest mind the best contentment has.  
With faire discourse the evening so they pas;  
For that olde man of pleasing wordes had store,  
And well could file his tonguge as smooth as glas:  
He told of Saintes and Popes, and evermore  
He strowd an *Ave Mary* after and before.

The extract above represents the victorious conflict the Red Cross Knight, Holiness, has with Error, or Heresy, the dragon, who represents Sin, or Catholicism, that is, Spain. The knight represents the Church of England, the dints on his shield being the persecutions the Church has suffered and the trials and difficulties over which it has triumphed. Una, the lady accompanying the knight, is Christianity, True Religion; the dwarf, Humility, represents the common people in the Church; and the old man with whom they stop over night is Archimago, who represents Satan, or Hypocrisy and Fraud.

Through the machinations of Archimago, Una and the Red Cross Knight are separated, and while she is wandering alone in search of him she meets the lion, as described in the first part of Canto Third. We shall call the extract *Una and the Lion*:

Nought is there under heav'ns wide hollownesse,  
That moves more deare compassion of mind,  
Then beautie brought t'unworthie wretchednesse  
Through envies snares, or fortunes freakes unkind.  
I, whether lately through her brightness blynd,

Or through alleageance, and fast fealty,  
Which I do owe unto all womankynd,  
Feele my hart perst with so great agony,  
When such I see, that all for pitty I could dy.

And now it is empassioned so deepe,  
For fairest Unaes sake, of whom I sing,  
That my frayle eies these lines with teares do steepe,  
To thinke how she through guyleful handeling,  
Though true as touch, though daughter of a king,  
Though faire as ever living wight was fayre,  
Though nor in word nor deede ill meriting,  
Is from her knight divorced in despayre,  
And her dew loves deryv'd to that vile witches shayre.

Yet she, most faithful Ladie, all this while  
Forsaken, wofull, solitarie mayd,  
Far from all peoples preace, as in exile,  
In wilderness and wastful deserts strayd,  
To seeke her knight; who, subtilly betrayd  
Through that late vision which th' Enchaunter wrought,  
Had her abandond. She, of nought affrayd,  
Through woods and wastnes wide him daily sought;  
Yet wished tydings none of him unto her brought.

One day, nigh wearie of the yrkesome way,  
From her unhastie beast she did alight;  
And on the grasse her dainty limbs did lay  
In secrete shadow, far from all mens sight:  
From her fayre head her fillet she undight,  
And layd her stole aside. Her angels face,  
As the great eye of heaven, shyned bright,  
And made a sunshine in the shady place;  
Did never mortall eye behold such heavenly grace.

It fortun'd, out of the thickest wood  
A ramping Lyon rushed suddeinly,  
Hunting full greedy after salvage blood.  
Soone as the royall virgin he did spy,



With gaping mouth at her ran greedily,  
To have attonce devourd her tender corse;  
But to the pray when as he drew more ny,  
His bloody rage aswaged with remorse,  
And, with the sight amazed, forgot his furious forse.

In stead thereof he kist her wearie feet,  
And lickt her lilly hands with fawning tong,  
As he her wronged innocence did weet.  
O, how can beautie maister the most strong,  
And simple truth subdue avenging wrong!  
Whose yielded pryde and proud submission,  
Still dreading death, when she had marked long,  
Her hart gan melt in great compassion;  
And drizling teares did shed for pure affection.

“The Lyon, Lord of everie beast in field.”  
Quoth she, “his princely puissance doth abate,  
And mightie proud to humble weake does yield,  
Forgetfull of the hungry rage, which late  
Him prickt, in pittie of my sad estate:  
But he, my Lyon, and my noble Lord,  
How does he find in cruell hart to hate  
Her, that him lov’d, and ever most adord  
As the God of my life? why hath he me abhord?”

Redounding tears did choke th’ end of her plaint,  
Which softly ecchoed from the neighbour wood;  
And, sad to see her sorrowful constraint,  
The kingly beast upon her gazing stood:  
With pittie calmd downe fell his angry mood.  
At last, in close hart shutting up her payne,  
Arose the virgin, borne of heavenly brood,  
And to her snowy Palfrey got agayne,  
To seeke her strayed Champion if she might attayne.

The Lyon would not leave her desolate,  
But with her went along, as a strong gard  
Of her chast person, and a faythfull mate

Of her sad troubles and misfortunes hard :  
Still, when she slept, he kept both watch and ward ;  
And, when she wakt, he wayted diligent,  
With humble service to her will prepard :  
From her fayre eyes he tooke commandement,  
And ever by her lookes conceived her intent.

From the fifth canto in the first book is  
taken *Duessa's Descent into Hell*:

Thence turning backe in silence soft they stole,  
And brought the heavy corse with easy pace  
To yawning gulfe of deep Avernus hole :  
By that same hole an entraunce, darke and bace,  
With smoake and sulphur hiding all the place,  
Descends to hell : there creature never past,  
That backe retourned without heavenly grace ;  
But dreadfull furies, which their chaines have brast,  
And damned sprights sent forth to make ill men aghast.

By that same way the direfull dames doe drive  
Their mournefull charett, fild with rusty blood,  
And downe to Plutoes house are come bilive :  
Which passing through, on every side them stood  
The trembling ghosts with sad amazed mood,  
Chattring their iron teeth, and staring wide  
With stonie eies ; and all the hellish brood  
Of feends infernall flockt on every side,  
To gaze on erthly wight, that with the Night durst ride.

They pas the bitter waves of Acheron,  
Where many soules sit wailing woefully ;  
And come to fiery flood of Phlegeton,  
Whereas the damned ghostes in torments fry,  
And with sharp shrilling shriekes doe bootlesse cry,  
Cursing high Iove, the which them thither sent  
The hous of endlesse Paine is built thereby,  
In which ten thousand sorts of punishment  
The cursed creatures doe eternally torment.

Before the threshold dreadful Cerberus  
 His three deformed heads did lay along,  
 Curled with thousand adders venomous;  
 And lilled forth his bloody flaming tong:  
 At them he gan to reare his bristles strong,  
 And felly gnarre, untill Dayes enemy  
 Did him appease; then downe his taile he hong,  
 And suffered them to passen quietly:  
 For she in hell and heaven had power equally.

There was Ixion turned on a wheele,  
 For daring tempt the queene of heaven to sin;  
 And Sisyphus an huge round stone did reele  
 Against an hill, ne might from labour lin;  
 There thirsty Tantalus hong by the chin;  
 And Tityus fed a vultur on his maw;  
 Typhoeus ioynts were stretched on a gin;  
 Theseus condemned to endlesse slouth by law;  
 And fifty sisters water in leke vessels draw.

They, all beholding worldly wights in place,  
 Leave off their worke, unmindfull of their smart,  
 To gaze on them; who forth by them doe pace,  
 Till they be come unto the furthest part;  
 Where was a cave ywrought by wondrous art,  
 Deepe, darke, uneasy, dolefull, comfortlesse,  
 In which sad Aesculapius far apart  
 Emprisond was in chaines remédillesse;  
 For that Hippolytus rent corse he did redresse.

Hippolytus a iolly huntsman was,  
 That wont in charett chace the foming bore:  
 He all his peeres in beauty did surpas:  
 But ladies love, as losse of time, forbore:  
 His wanton stepdame loved him the more;  
 But, when she saw her offred sweets refusd,  
 Her love she turned to hate, and him before  
 His father fierce of treason false accusd,  
 And with her gealous termes his open eares abusd;

Who, all in rage, his sea-god syre besought  
 Some cursed vengeance on his sonne to cast :  
 From surging gulf two monsters streight were brought  
 With dread whereof his chacing steedes aghast  
 Both charett swifte and huntsman overcast.  
 His goodly corps, on ragged cliffs yrent,  
 Was quite dismembred, and his member chast  
 Scattered on every mountaine as he went,  
 That of Hippolytus was lefte no moniment.

His cruell stepdame, seeing what was donne,  
 Her wicked daies with wretched knife did end,  
 In death avowing th' innocence of her sonne,  
 Which hearing, his rash syre began to rend  
 His heare, and hasty tong that did offend :  
 Tho, gathering up the reliques of his smart,  
 By Dianes meanes who was Hippolyts frend,  
 Them brought to Aesculape, that by his art  
 Did heale them all againe, and ioyned every part.

Such wondrous science in mans witt to rain  
 When Love avizd, that could the dead revive,  
 And fates expired could renew again,  
 Of endlesse life he might him not deprive ;  
 But unto hell did thrust him downe alive,  
 With flashing thunderbolt ywounded sore ;  
 Where, long remaining, he did alwaies strive  
 Himselfe with salves to health for to restore,  
 And slake the heavenly fire that raged evermore.

There auncient Night arriving, did alight  
 From her nigh-weary wayne, and in her armes  
 To Aesculapius brought the wounded knight :  
 Whom having softly disaraid of armes,  
 Tho gan to him discover all his harmes,  
 Beseeching him with prayer, and with praise,  
 If either salves, or oyles, or herbes, or charmes,  
 A fordonne wight from dore of death mote raise,  
 He would at her request prolong her nephews daies.

"Ah dame," quoth he, "thou temptest me in vaine  
 To dare the thing, which daily yet I rew;  
 And the old cause of my continued paine  
 With like attempt to like end to renew.  
 Is not enough, that, thrust from heaven dew,  
 Here endlesse penance for one fault I pay;  
 But that redoubled crime with vengeance new  
 Thou biddest me to eeke? can Night defray  
 The wrath of thundring Iove, that rules both Night and  
 Day?"

"No so," quoth she; "but, sith that heavens king  
 From hope of heaven hath thee excluded quight,  
 Why fearest thou, that canst not hope for thing;  
 And fearest not that more thee hurten might,  
 Now in the powre of everlasting Night?  
 Goe to then, O thou far renowned sonne  
 Of great Apollo, shew thy famous might  
 In medicine, that els hath to thee wonne  
 Great pains, and greater praise, both never to be donne."

Her words prevaild; and then the learned leach  
 His cunning hand gan to his wounds to lay,  
 And all things els the which his art did teach;  
 Which having seene, from thence arose away  
 The mother of dredd Darknesse, and let stay  
 Aveugles sonne there in the leaches cure;  
 And, backe retourning, took her wonted way  
 To ronne her timely race, whilst Phoebus pure  
 In westerne waves his weary wagon did recure.

From the seventh canto in the third book is  
 taken the anecdote, *Florimel and the Witch's  
 Son*:

Like as an hynd forth singled from the heard,  
 That hath escaped from a ravenous beast,  
 Yet flies away of her owne feete afeard;  
 And every leafe, that shaketh with the least  
 Murmure of winde, her terror hath encreast:

So fledd fayre Florimell from her vaine feare,  
 Long after she from peril was releast :  
 Each shade she saw, and each noyse she did heare,  
 Did seeme to be the same which she escapt whileare.

All that same evening she in flying spent,  
 And all that night her course continewed :  
 Ne did she let dull sleepe once to relent  
 Nor wearinesse to slack her hast, but fled  
 Ever alike, as if her former dred  
 Were hard behind, her ready to arrest :  
 And her white palfrey, having conquered  
 The maistring raines out of her weary wrest,  
 Perforce her carried where ever he thought best.

So long as breath and hable puissaunce  
 Did native corage unto him supply,  
 His pace he freshly forward did aduance,  
 And carried her beyond all ieopardy ;  
 But nought that wanteth rest can long aby :  
 He, having through incessant traveill spent  
 His force, at last perforce adowne did ly,  
 Ne foot could further move : the lady gent  
 Thereat was suddein strook with great astonishment ;

And, forst t' alight, on foot mote algates fare  
 A traveiler unwonted to such way ;  
 Need teacheth her this lesson hard and rare,  
*That Fortune all in equall launce doth sway,*  
*And mortall miseries doth make her play.*  
 So long she traveild, till at length she came  
 To an hilles side, which did to her bewray  
 A litle valley subiect to the same,  
 All coverd with thick woodes that quite it overcame

Through th' tops of the high trees she did descry  
 A little smoke, whose vapour thin and light  
 Reeking aloft uprolled to the sky :  
 Which cheareful signe did send unto her sight

That in the same did wonne some living wight.  
Eftsoones her steps she thereunto applyd,  
And came at last in weary wretched plight  
Unto the place, to which her hope did guyde  
To finde some refuge there, and rest her wearie syde.

There in a gloomy hollow glen she found  
A little cottage, built of stickes and reedes  
In homely wize, and wald with sods around ;  
In which a witch did dwell, in loathly weedes  
And wilfull want, all carelesse of her needes ;  
So choosing solitarie to abide  
Far from all neighbours, that her divelish deedes  
And hellish arts from people she might hide,  
And hurt far off unknowne whomever she envide.

The damzell there arriving entred in ;  
Where sitting on the flore the hag she found  
Busie (as seem'd) about some wicked gin :  
Who, soone as she beheld that suddeine stound,  
Lightly upstartd from the dustie ground,  
And with fell looke and hollow deadly gaze  
Stared on her awhile, as one astound,  
Ne had one word to speake for great amaze ;  
But shewd by outward signes that dread her sence did  
daze.

At last, turning her feare to foolish wrath,  
She askt, What devill had her thether brought,  
And who she was, and what unwonted path  
Had guided her, unwelcomed, unsought ?  
To which the damzell full of doubtfull thought  
Her mildly answer'd ; "Beldame, be not wroth  
With silly virgin, by adventure brought  
Unto your dwelling, ignorant and loth,  
That crave but rowme to rest while tempest overblo'th."

With that adowne out of her christall eyne  
Few trickling teares she softly forth let fall,

That like two orient perles did purely shyne  
 Upon her snowy cheeke ; and therewithall  
 She sighed soft, that none so bestiall  
 Nor salvage hart but ruth of her sad plight  
 Would make to melt, or piteously appall ;  
 And that vile hag, all were her whole delight  
 In mischief, was much moved at so pitteous sight :

And gan recomfort her, in her rude wyse,  
 With womanish compassion of her plaint,  
 Wiping the teares from her suffused eyes,  
 And bidding her sit downe to rest her faint  
 And wearie limbes awhile : she nothing quaint  
 Nor 'sdeignfull of so homely fashion,  
 Sith brought she was now to so hard constraint,  
 Sate downe upon the dusty ground anon ;  
 As glad of that small rest, as bird of tempest gon.

Tho gan she gather up her garments rent  
 And her loose lockes to dight in order dew  
 With golden wreath and gorgeous ornament ;  
 Whom such whenas the wicked hag did view,  
 She was astonisht at her heavenly hew,  
 And doubted her to deeme an earthly wight,  
 But or some goddess, or of Dianes crew,  
 And thought her to adore with humble spright :  
 T' adore thing so divine as beauty were but right.

This wicked woman had a wicked sonne,  
 The comfort of her age and weary dayes,  
 A laesy loord for nothing good to donne,  
 But stretched forth in ydlenesse alwayes,  
 Ne ever cast his mind to covet prayse,  
 Or ply himselfe to any honest trade ;  
 But all the day before the sunny rayes  
 He us'd to slug, or sleepe in slothfull shade :  
 Such laesienesse both lewd and poor attonce him made.



He, comming home at undertime, there found  
The fayrest creature that he ever saw  
Sitting beside his mother on the ground ;  
The sight whereof did greatly him adaw,  
And his base thought with terroure and with aw  
So inly smot, that as one, which hath gaz'd  
On the bright sunne unwares, doth soone withdraw  
His feeble eyne with too much brightnes daz'd ;  
So stared he on her, and stood long while amaz'd.

Softly at last he gan his mother aske,  
What mister wight that was, and whence deriv'd,  
That in so straunge disguizement there did maske,  
And by what accident she there arriv'd ?  
But she, as one nigh of her wits depriv'd  
With nought but ghastly lookes him answered ;  
Like to a ghost, that lately is reviv'd  
From Stygian shores where late it wandered :  
So both at her, and each at other wondered.

But the fayre virgin was so meeke and myld,  
That she to them vouchsafed to embrace  
Her goodly port, and to their senses vyld  
Her gentle speach applyde, that in short space  
She grew familiare in that desert place.  
During which time the chorle, through her so kind  
And courteise, conceiv'd affection bace,  
And cast to love her in his brutish mind ;  
No love, but brutish lust, that was so beastly tind.

Closely the wicked flame his bowels brent,  
And shortly grew into outrageous fire ;  
Yet had he not the hart, nor hardiment,  
As unto her to utter his desire ;  
His caytive thought durst not so high aspire :  
But with soft sighes and lovely semblaunces  
He ween'd that his affection entire  
She should aread ; many resembraunces  
To her he made, and many kinde remembraunces.

Oft from the forrest wildings he did bring,  
 Whose sides empurpled were with smyling red;  
 And oft young birds, which he had taught to sing  
 His maistresse praises sweetly caroled:  
 Girlonds of flowres sometimes for her faire hed  
 He ne would dight; sometimes the squirrel wild  
 He brought to her in bands, as conquered  
 To be her thrall, his fellow-servant vild:  
 All which she of him tooke with countenance meeke and  
 mild.

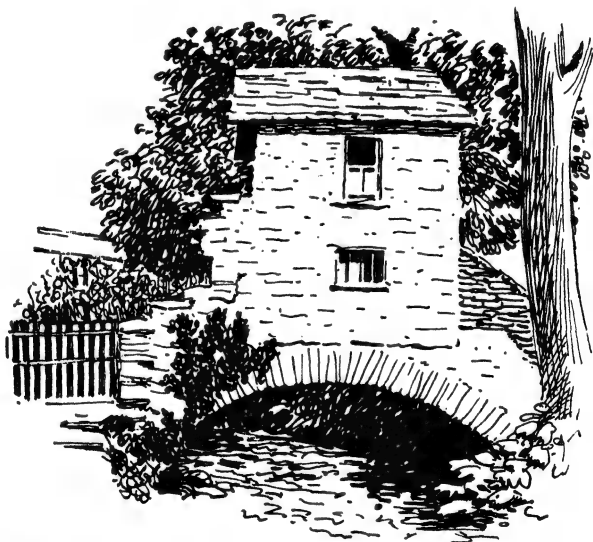
But, past a while, when she fit season saw  
 To leave that desert mansion, she cast  
 In secret wize herselfe thence to withdraw,  
 For feare of mischiefe, which she did forecast  
 Might by the witch or by her sonne compast;  
 Her wearie palfrey, closely as she might,  
 Now well recovered after long repast,  
 In his proud furnitures she freshly dight,  
 His late miswandred wayes now to remeasure right.

And earely, ere the dawning day appear'd,  
 She forth issewed, and on her iourney went;  
 She went in perill, of each noyse affeard  
 And of each shade that did itselfe present;  
 For still she feared to be overhent  
 Of that vile hag, or her uncivile sonne;  
 Who when, too late awaking, well they kent  
 That their fayre guest was gone, they both begonne  
 To make exceeding mone as they had beene undonne.

We have not space for further extracts from  
 the wonderful poem, but we cannot leave it  
 without adding the following stanza from the  
 sixth book:

It is the mind that maketh good or ill,  
 That maketh wretch or happie, rich or poore:

For some, that hath abundance at his will,  
Hath not enough, but wants in greatest store ;  
The other, that hath litle, asks no more,  
But in that litle is both rich and wise ;  
For wisdom is most riches ; fooles therefore  
They are, which fortunes doe by vowes devize ;  
Sith each unto himselfe his life may fortunize.



BRIDGE HOUSE AT AMBLESIDE



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE ELIZABETHAN AGE (CONTINUED)

#### THE DRAMA PRIOR TO SHAKESPEARE

**E**ARLY RELIGIOUS DRAMAS. That which makes the Elizabethan Age one of the greatest in international literature is the perfection which the drama attained in the work of William Shakespeare. In order to give a comprehensive idea of the development of this great art we have deferred our comments on the early drama, and accordingly, we must go back some years and bring the history down to the present time. The language of the Church remained Latin for centuries, and finally there came about the extraordinary situation in which the people could not understand the language of their priests and preachers. Accordingly, it became necessary for the Church to interest and enliven the recollection of the people in the principles of

their religion, and the drama was found to serve that purpose best of all. Three types of simple dramatic representations appeared, the first two of which are known as *Mysteries* and *Miracle* plays, according as the subjects are purely Scriptural or deal with the lives of the saints. However, the terms are loosely used, and the word *Mysteries* is often applied to both classes of plays. The third group is composed of the *Moralities*, or allegorical dramas, which personify, either in whole or in part, the vices or the virtues.

These medieval dramas appeared in all the European countries whose literature we have been considering, so that it is only necessary here to trace their development and effect upon English literature. The earliest appearance of a *Miracle* play in England, so far as we know, was one probably written in Latin that was put upon the stage early in the twelfth century. But the growth of the vernacular was steady, if slow, and from Latin the *Miracle* plays advanced into French and gradually into the national tongue, retaining, however, French for royal characters, in order to preserve their dignity.

II. MYSTERIES. Perhaps the oldest example of an English *Mystery* that has come down to us is *The Harrowing of Hell*, founded on a Christian legend. This, however, is scarcely a dramatic piece, but consists rather of a dialogue between Christ and Satan, in which the Savior returns from Hades with the souls of



### LINCOLN CATHEDRAL

ERECTED IN TWELFTH AND THIRTEENTH CENTURIES, NORMAN AND  
GOTHIC FEATURES PREDOMINATING.



the old patriarchs. The following lines give some idea of the character of the dialogue. It is here given practically in the original spelling:

*Sathanas.* How now? this wold I were told in towne,  
Thou says God is thi syre;  
I shalle the prove by good reson  
Thou moyttes<sup>1</sup> as man dos into myre.

To breke thi byddyng they were fulle bowne,<sup>2</sup>  
And soon they wroght at my desyre,  
From paradise thou putt thym downe,  
In helle here to have thare hyre;<sup>3</sup>

And thou thi self, by day and nyght,  
Taght<sup>4</sup> ever alle men emang,  
Ever to do reson and right,  
And here thou wyrkys<sup>5</sup> alle wrang.

*Jesus.* I wyrk no wrang, that shalle thou wytt,<sup>6</sup>  
If I my men fro wo wille wyn;<sup>7</sup>  
My prophettes playnly prechyd it,  
Alle the noytys<sup>8</sup> that I begyn;

They saide that I shud be that ilke  
In helle where I shud entre in,  
To save my servandes fro that pytt  
Where dampynynd saullys<sup>9</sup> shalle syt for syn.

And ilke true prophete taylle<sup>10</sup>  
Shalle be fulfillid in me;  
I have thaym boght fro baylle,<sup>11</sup>  
In blis now shalle thay be.

*Sathanas.* Now since thou list to legge the lawes<sup>12</sup>  
Thou shalbe tenyd or we twyn,<sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Errest.<sup>2</sup> Ready.<sup>3</sup> Hire, reward.<sup>4</sup> Taught.<sup>5</sup> Workest.<sup>6</sup> Know.<sup>7</sup> Win, save (my men from woe).<sup>8</sup> Concerns, things of note.<sup>9</sup> Damned souls.<sup>10</sup> True prophets' tale.<sup>11</sup> Bale, destruction.<sup>12</sup> Quote, or read, the laws.<sup>13</sup> Convinced ere we part.



For those that thou to witnes drawes  
Fulle even agans the shalle begyn;

As Salaman saide in his sawes,<sup>14</sup>  
Who that ones commys helle within  
He shalle never owte, as clerkes knawes,  
Therfor, belamy, let be thy dyn.<sup>15</sup>  
Job thi servande also  
In his tyme can telle  
That nawder freynde nor fo  
Shalle fynde relese in helle.<sup>16</sup>

*Jesus.* He sayde fulle soythe, that shalle thou se,  
In helle shalbe no relese,  
Bot of that place then ment he  
Where synfulle care shalle ever encrese.

In that baylle ay shalle thou be,  
Where sorrowes seyr shalle never sesse<sup>17</sup>  
And my folk that wer most fre<sup>18</sup>  
Shalle pas unto the place of peasse;

For thay were here with my wille,  
And so thay shalle furthe weynde,<sup>19</sup>  
Thou shalle thi self fulfyllle,  
Ever wo withoutten ende.

*Sathanas.* Whi, and wille thou take theym alle me fro?<sup>20</sup>  
Then thynk me<sup>21</sup> thou ar unkynde;  
Nay, I pray the do not so,  
Umthynke<sup>22</sup> the better in thy mynde,

Or els let me with the go;  
I pray the leyfe me not behynde.

<sup>14</sup> Saws, proverbs.

<sup>15</sup> Din, noise.

<sup>16</sup> Neither friend nor foe shall find release in hell.

<sup>17</sup> Sorrows sore shall never cease.

<sup>18</sup> Noble.

<sup>19</sup> Wend, go.

<sup>20</sup> Take them all from me.

<sup>21</sup> Methinks.

<sup>22</sup> Bethink.

*Jesus.* Nay, tratur, thou shalle won in wo,<sup>23</sup>  
And tille a stake<sup>24</sup> I shalle the bynde.

*Sathanas.* Now here I how thou menys<sup>25</sup> emang  
With mesure and malyce for to melle,<sup>26</sup>  
Bot sen thou says it shalbe lang,  
Yit som let alle wayes with us dwelle.

*Jesus.* Yis, witt thou welle, els were greatt wrang,  
Thou shalle have Caym<sup>27</sup> that slo Abelle,  
And alle that hastes theym self to hang,  
As dyd Judas and Architophelle;

And Daton and Abaron and alle of thare assent,<sup>28</sup>  
Cursyd tyranttes ever ilkon<sup>29</sup> that me and myn tor-  
mente.

And alle that wille not lere<sup>30</sup> my law  
That I have left in land for new<sup>31</sup>  
That makes my commyng knaw,<sup>32</sup>  
And alle my sacramentes persew;

My deth, my rysyng, red by raw,<sup>33</sup>  
Who trow thaym not thay ar untrewre,  
Unto my dome<sup>34</sup> I shalle theym draw,  
And juge thaym wars<sup>35</sup> then any Jew.  
And thay that lyst to lere my law and lyf therby  
Shalle never have harmes here, bot welth as is worthy.

*Sathanas.* Now here my hand, I hold me payde,  
Thise poyntes ar playnly for my prow,<sup>36</sup>  
If this be trew as thou has saide  
We shalle have mo then we have now;

<sup>23</sup> Dwell in woe.

<sup>24</sup> To a stake.

<sup>25</sup> Moanest.

<sup>26</sup> With measure and malice (malice aforethought) to meddle.

<sup>27</sup> Cain.

<sup>28</sup> Dathan and Abiram, and all of their.

<sup>29</sup> Each one.

<sup>30</sup> Learn.

<sup>31</sup> Henceforth.

<sup>32</sup> My coming known.

<sup>33</sup> By row, line by line, all in order.

<sup>34</sup> Doom.

<sup>35</sup> Judge them worse.

<sup>36</sup> Profit.

Thise lawes that thou has late here laide  
 I shalle thym lere not to alow,<sup>37</sup>  
 If thay myn take<sup>38</sup> thay ar betraide,  
 And I shalle turne thym tytte I trow.<sup>39</sup>

I shalle walk eest, I shalle walk west,  
 And gar theym wyrk welle war.<sup>40</sup>  
*Jesus.* Nay feynde, thou shalbe feste,<sup>41</sup>  
 That thou shalle flyt no far.<sup>42</sup>

*Sathanas.* Feste? fy! that were a wykyd treson!  
 Belamy, thou shalle be smytt.<sup>43</sup>  
*Jesus.* Deville, I commaunde the to go downe  
 Into thi sete where thou shalle syt.

*Sathanas.* Alas! for doylle<sup>44</sup> and care,  
 I synk into helle pyt.  
*Rybald.* Sir Sathanas, so saide I are,<sup>45</sup>  
 Now shalle thou have a fytt.

*Jesus.* Com now furthe, my childer alle,  
 I forgyf you youre mys;<sup>46</sup>  
 Withe me now go ye shalle  
 To joy and endles blys.

*Adam.* Lord, thou art fulle mekylle of myght,<sup>47</sup>  
 That mekys thi self on this manere,  
 To help us alle as thou had us hight,  
 When bothe frofett I and thy fere;<sup>48</sup>

Here have we dwelt withoutten light  
 Four thousand and six hundreth yere,  
 Now se we by this solempne sight  
 How that mercy makes us dere.

<sup>37</sup> Teach them not to permit.

<sup>38</sup> Turn them to it, I trow.

<sup>39</sup> Fast-bound.

<sup>40</sup> Bel ami (fair friend), thou shalt be smitten down.

<sup>41</sup> Grief.

<sup>42</sup> Mickle, great of might.

<sup>37</sup> Follow mine (my laws).

<sup>38</sup> And make them grow well aware

<sup>39</sup> Fly not far.

<sup>40</sup> So said I e'er,—always.

<sup>41</sup> Sins.

<sup>42</sup> Companion.

*Eva.* Lord, we were worthy more tornamentes<sup>40</sup> to tast,<sup>50</sup>  
Thou help us lord of thy mercy, as thou of myght is  
mast.<sup>51</sup>

By 1311 the festival of Corpus Christi had become thoroughly established, with a great open-air procession, and the popular demand for amusement, combined with the decrees of the Church that the ceremonies should have a religious character, rather forced the resort to dramatic representations of some kind. At this juncture the trade guilds came forward and assumed charge of the entertainments; the result of their efforts was to give to England a national drama, which, however rude, was highly appreciated by both clergy and people, and patronized even by the aristocracy. We have elsewhere written of the rise of the guilds and their great importance and influence in the Middle Ages, so that at the time in question the number of the associations and their wealth and importance need not surprise us. The various guilds coöperated, and to each was given that section of the long representation, often extending over several days, which accorded best with their labor—as, for instance, the building of the ark would be given to the ship-masters' guild.

One great piece, then, was composed of a number of consecutive plays, which covered the entire course of sacred history; and these plays were carried about from place to place and performed upon two movable stages, one

<sup>40</sup> Torments.

<sup>50</sup> Taste.

<sup>51</sup> Master.

of which consisted of the *pageant*, or platform, upon which the play was given, and the other of a scaffolding for the spectators. The pageant consisted of two floors, the upper, upon which the actors appeared, and the lower, which served as a dressing-room. There was little scenery, but the actors wore elaborate costumes and used liberally stage properties of various kinds. To depict Paradise was quite impossible, but the producers of the plays reveled in representations of Hell, whose mouth they often showed as the actual mouth of a huge monster. The demons were armed with pitchforks and clubs, and oftentimes wore hideous masks. The whole representation would seem to us grotesque and ludicrous, with the comic scenes curiously mingling the absurd with the sublime. However, in those early years the people were delighted, and did not seem to be troubled by inconsistencies. The gravest respect was paid to Scriptural characters; the comic element, whenever it entered, was confined to secondary or fictitious characters. The humorist, for instance, seemed to take great pleasure in depicting the character of Noah's wife, who was made a regular vixen and who gave an infinitude of trouble to the old navigator.

Four series of Mystery plays survive, namely, those of Chester, consisting of twenty-five plays, with some such as that on the history of Balaam and his ass, upon subjects not treated elsewhere; the most valuable York series, con-

sisting of forty-eight pieces; the Townley series, numbering thirty-one, written by a real poet, who had considerable gifts both of humor and tragic expression; and the Coventry Mysteries, comprising forty-two pieces, concerning whose origin less is known than of any other type.

Pathetic passages and those containing real tenderness are not difficult to find, and in places the sentiment is charming. In the *Play of the Shepherds*, the venerable Simeon tries to realize the prediction of Isaiah, but the Immaculate Conception puzzles him:

A Lorde, muche is thy power!  
A wonder find I written here,  
It saythe a maiden fair and clear  
Shall conceive and bear  
A sonne called Emanuel.  
But of this leeve I never a del.  
It is wrong written, as I have hede,  
Or elles wonder were.  
He that wrote this was a fone  
To write a virgin hereupon,  
That should conceive without help of man;  
This writing marvels me.  
I will scrape it away anon.  
There as a virgin is written in,  
I will write, a good woman  
For so it should be.

What he finds when he again refers to the scroll is thus told:

O Lorde, how may this be to-day  
That I wrote last I find away,  
And of red letters in stout array  
A Virgin written thereon.  
Nay, hereafter, I will assay

Whether this miracle be vereye  
And scrape this word written so gaye,  
And write, a good woman.

When he again sees the manuscript and finds the word "Virgin" restored in letters of gold, he gives up the contest and believes.

The Miracle play in England reached the height of its popularity in the fifteenth century, when the spread of culture and the improved condition of the people began to destroy the interest that might otherwise have increased. The Reformation was primarily responsible for the early demise of the Miracle, and by the Elizabethan period the better classes of society were ready for a different kind of entertainment, while the common people gave their attention to rougher sports.

III. MORALITIES. The Morality followed naturally on the heels of the Mystery and Miracle plays, and was a direct development from them. In England Moralities never reached the excellence of the autos of Calderon, which we have elsewhere considered, but were highly popular down to the time of Elizabeth. One of the earliest of the medieval Moralities is *The Castle of Perseverance*, which represents Mankind hesitating to accept the advice of his Good Angel, following instead the allurements of his Evil Angel. Later he repents, and in the Castle of Perseverance, garrisoned by all the Christian virtues, stands a siege, from which he is finally delivered by Grace. The following stanzas are an extract:

## THE BAD ANGEL

Cum on, man, wherefore hast thou care?  
Go we to the world, I rede thee, blyve.  
For then thou shalt soon ryght well fare,  
In case if thou thynke for to thryve.  
No lord schal thee be lycke.  
Take the world to thine entent,  
And let thy love be thereon lent  
With gold and silver and rich rent.  
Anon shalt thou be riche.

## MANKIND

Now syth thou hast behetyn me so,  
I will go with thee and essay.  
I ne lette for friend nor foe,  
But with the world I will go play  
Certes a little throw.  
In this world is all my trust,  
To lyve in lykyng and in lust:  
Have he and I onys cust,  
We shall not part, I trowe.

## THE GOOD ANGEL

A! nay, man! for Christes blod!  
Cum again by street and stile!  
The world is wicked and full wod,  
And thou shalt levyn but a while,  
What covetest thou to win?  
Man, think on thine ending day,  
When thou shalt be closed under clay,  
And if thou think of that array  
Certes thou shalt not synne.

No English writer of Moralities was eminent. We have, however, two pure dramas, popular toward the close of the fifteenth century, which may be said to form a transition from the Miracle plays to the Interludes, of which we shall speak later. They are *Hicks-*



*corner* and *Everyman*. *Hickscorner* has greater variety and more of the comic element; the leading character is a lively, roistering fellow, who leads Imagination and Free Will astray, though they are eventually set right by Perseverance and Contemplation. The following description is interesting as an account of the evening acts of a thief of that time:

Sirs, he walked through Holborn,  
Three hours after the sun was down,  
And walked up toward Saint Giles in the Fields,  
He hove still, and there beheld;  
But there he could not speed of his prey,  
And straight to Ludgate he took the way;  
Ye wot well, that 'pothecaries walk very late,  
He came to a door and privily spake  
To a prentice for a penny-worth of euphorbium,  
And also for a halfpenny-worth of alum plumb;  
This good servant served him shortly,  
And said, is there aught else that you would buy?  
Then he asked for a mouthful of quick brimstone,  
And down into the cellar when the servant was gone,  
Aside as he cast his eye,  
A great bag of money did he spy;  
Therein was a hundred pound:  
He turned him to his feet, and yede his way round.  
He was lodged in Newgate at the Swan,  
And every man took him for a gentleman.

*Everyman*, written by a clergyman, no doubt, like most of the *Miracles* and *Moralities*, is one of the finest relics of that early time. It is a noble treatment of the subject of death, and teaches the moral that nothing will avail a man but a well-spent life and the comforts of religion. Bishop Percy has said: "It is

remarkable that in this old simple drama the fable is constructed upon the strictest model of the Greek tragedy. The action is simply one, the time of action is that of the performance, the scene is never changed, nor the stage ever empty. Except in the circumstance of Everyman's expiring on the stage, the *Samson Agonistes* of Milton is hardly formed on a severer plan."

The title of the Morality is as follows:

HERE BEGINNETH A TREATISE HOW THE HIGH FATHER OF  
HEAVEN SENDETH DEATH TO SUMMON EVERY CREATURE  
TO COME AND GIVE ACCOUNT OF THEIR LIVES IN THIS  
WORLD AND IS IN MANNER OF A MORAL PLAY.

After God has sent a messenger to summon Death to his presence, the play proceeds as follows:

*God.* Go thou to *Everyman*,  
And show him in my name  
A pilgrimage he must on him take,  
Which he in no wise may escape;  
And that he bring with him a sure reckoning  
Without delay or any tarrying.

*Death.* Lord, I will in the world go run over all,  
And cruelly outsearch both great and small;  
Every man will I beset that liveth beastly  
Out of God's laws, and dreadeth not folly:  
He that loveth riches I will strike with my dart,  
His sight to blind, and from heaven to depart,  
Except that alms be his good friend,  
In hell for to dwell, world without end.  
Lo, yonder I see *Everyman* walking;  
Full little he thinketh on my coming;  
His mind is on fleshly lusts and his treasure,  
And great pain it shall cause him to endure  
Before the Lord Heaven King.

*Everyman*, stand still; whither art thou going  
Thus gayly? Hast thou thy Maker forget?

*Everyman*. Why askst thou?

Wouldest thou wete?

*Death*. Yea, sir, I will show you;  
In great haste I am sent to thee  
From God out of his majesty.

*Everyman*. What, sent to me?

*Death*. Yea, certainly.

Though thou have forget him here,  
He thinketh on thee in the heavenly sphere,  
As, or we depart, thou shalt know.

*Everyman*. What desireth God of me?

*Death*. That shall I show thee;  
A reckoning he will needs have  
Without any longer respite.

*Everyman*. To give a reckoning longer leisure I crave;  
This blind matter troubleth my wit.

*Death*. On thee thou must take a long journey:  
Therefore thy book of count with thee thou bring;  
For turn again thou can not by no way,  
And look thou be sure of thy reckoning:  
For before God thou shalt answer, and show  
Thy many bad deeds and good but a few;  
How thou hast spent thy life, and in what wise,  
Before the chief lord of paradise.  
Have ado that we were in that way,  
For, wete thou well, thou shalt make none attournay.

*Everyman*. Full unready I am such reckoning to give.  
I know thee not: what messenger art thou?

*Death*. I am *Death*, that no man dreadeth.  
For every man I rest and no man spareth;  
For it is God's commandment  
That all to me should be obedient.

*Everyman*. O *Death*, thou comest when I had thee least  
in mind;  
In thy power it lieth me to save,  
Yet of my good will I give thee, if ye will be kind,  
Yea, a thousand pound shalt thou have,

And defer this matter till another day.

*Death.* *Everyman*, it may not be by no way ;

I set not by gold, silver, nor riches,

Ne by pope, emperor, king, duke, ne princes.

For and I would receive gifts great,

All the world I might get ;

But my custom is clean contrary.

I give thee no respite : come hence, and not tarry.

*Everyman.* Alas, shall I have no longer respite ?

I may say *Death* giveth no warning :

To think on thee, it maketh my heart sick,

For all unready is my book of reckoning.

But twelve year and I might have abiding,

My counting book I would make so clear,

That my reckoning I should not need to fear.

Wherefore, *Death*, I pray thee, for God's mercy,

Spare me till I be provided of remedy.

*Death.* Thee availeth not to cry, weep, and pray :

But haste thee lightly that you were gone the journey,

And prove thy friends if thou can.

For, wete thou well, the tide abideth no man,

And in the world each living creature

For Adam's sin must die of nature.

*Everyman.* *Death*, if I should this pilgrimage take,

And my reckoning surely make,

Show me, for saint *Charity*,

Should I not come again shortly ?

*Death.* No, *Everyman* ; and thou be once there,

Thou mayst never more come here,

Trust me verily.

*Everyman.* O gracious God, in the high seat celestial,

Have mercy on me in this most need ;

Shall I have no company from this vale terrestrial

Of mine acquaintance that way me to lead ?

*Death.* Yea, if any be so hardy,

That would go with thee and bear thee company.

Hie thee that you were gone to God's magnificence,

Thy reckoning to give before his presence.

What, weenest thou thy life is given thee,

And thy worldly goods also?

*Everyman.* I had wend so, verily.

*Death.* Nay, nay; it was but lent thee;

For as soon as thou art go,

Another awhile shall have it, and then go therefro

Even as thou hast done.

*Everyman,* thou art mad; thou hast thy wits five,

And here on earth will not amend thy life,

For suddenly I do come.

*Everyman.* O wretched caitiff, whither shall I flee,

That I might scape this endless sorrow!

Now, gentle *Death*, spare me till to-morrow,

That I may amend me

With good advisement.

*Death.* Nay, thereto I will not consent,

Nor no man will I respite,

But to the heart suddenly I shall smite

Without any advisement.

And now out of thy sight I will me hie;

See thou make thee ready shortly,

For thou mayst say this is the day

That no man living may scape away.

*Everyman.* Alas, I may well weep with sighs deep;

Now have I no manner of company

To help me in my journey, and me to keep;

And also my writing is full unready.

How shall I do now for to excuse me?

I would to God I had never be gete!

To my soul a full great profit it had be;

For now I fear pains huge and great.

The time passeth; Lord, help that all wrought;

For though I mourn it availeth nought.

The day passeth, and is almost a-go;

I wot not well what for to do.

To whom were I best my complaint to make?

What, and I to *Fellowship* thereof spake,

And showed him of this sudden chance?

For in him is all mine affiance;

We have in the world so many a day

- Be on good friends in sport and play.  
I see him yonder, certainly;  
I trust that he will bear me company;  
Therefore to him will I speak to ease my sorrow.  
Well met, good *Fellowship*, and good morrow!  
*Fellowship*. *Everyman*, good morrow by this day.  
Sir, why lookest thou so piteously?  
If any thing be amiss, I pray thee, me say,  
That I may help to remedy.  
*Everyman*. Yea, good *Fellowship*, yea,  
I am in great jeopardy.  
*Fellowship*. My true friend, show to me your mind;  
I will not forsake thee, unto my life's end,  
In the way of good company.  
*Everyman*. That was well spoken, and lovingly.  
*Fellowship*. Sir, I must needs know your heaviness;  
I have pity to see you in any distress;  
If any have you wronged ye shall revenged be,  
Though I on the ground be slain for thee,—  
Though that I know before that I should die.  
*Everyman*. Verily, *Fellowship*, gramercy.  
*Fellowship*. Tush! by thy thanks I set not a straw.  
Show me your grief, and say no more.  
*Everyman*. If I my heart should to you break,  
And then you to turn your mind from me,  
And would not me comfort, when you hear me speak,  
Then should I ten times sorrier be.  
*Fellowship*. Sir, I say as I will do in deed.  
*Everyman*. Then be you a good friend at need:  
I have found you true here before.  
*Fellowship*. And so ye shall evermore;  
For, in faith, and thou go to Hell,  
I will not forsake thee by the way!  
*Everyman*. Ye speak like a good friend; I believe you  
well;  
I shall deserve it, and I may.  
*Fellowship*. I speak of no deserving, by this day.  
For he that will say and nothing do  
Is not worthy with good company to go;

Therefore show me the grief of your mind,  
As to your friend most loving and kind.

*Everyman.* I shall show you how it is;

Commanded I am to go a journey,  
A long way, hard and dangerous,  
And give a strait count without delay  
Before the high judge Adonai.

Wherefore I pray you, bear me company,  
As ye have promised, in this journey.

*Fellowship.* That is matter indeed! Promise is duty,

But, and I should take such a voyage on me,  
I know it well, it should be to my pain:  
Also it make me afeard, certain.

But let us take counsel here as well as we can,  
For your words would fear a strong man.

*Everyman.* Why, ye said, If I had need,  
Ye would me never forsake, quick nor dead,  
Though it were to Hell truly.

*Fellowship.* So I said, certainly,  
But such pleasures be set aside, thee sooth to say:  
And also, if we took such a journey,  
When should we come again?

*Everyman.* Nay, never again till the day of doom.

*Fellowship.* In faith, then will not I come there!

Who hath you these tidings brought?

*Everyman.* Indeed, *Death* was with me here.

*Fellowship.* Now, by God that all hath bought,

If *Death* were the messenger,  
For no man that is living to-day  
I will not go that loath journey—  
Not for the father that begat me!

*Everyman.* Ye promised other wise, pardie.

*Fellowship.* I wot well I say so truly;

And yet if thou wilt eat, and drink, and make good  
cheer,

Or haunt to women, the lusty company,  
I would not forsake you, while the day is clear,  
Trust me verily!

*Everyman.* Yea, thereto ye would be ready;

To go to mirth, solace, and play,  
Your mind will sooner apply  
Than to bear me company in my long journey.  
*Fellowship.* Now, in good faith, I will not that way.  
But and thou wilt murder, or any man kill,  
In that I will help thee with a good will!  
*Everyman.* O that is a simple advice indeed!  
Gentle *fellow*, help me in my necessity; . . . .  
And now, gentle *Fellowship*, remember me.  
*Fellowship.* Whether ye have loved me or no,  
By Saint John, I will not with thee go.  
*Everyman.* Yet I pray thee, take the labor, and do so  
much for me  
To bring me forward, for saint charity,  
And comfort me till I come without the town.  
*Fellowship.* Nay, and thou would give me a new gown,  
I will not a foot with thee go;  
But and you had tarried I would not have left thee so.  
And as now, God speed thee in thy journey,  
For from thee I will depart as fast as I may.  
*Everyman.* Whither away, *Fellowship*? will you for-  
sake me?  
*Fellowship.* Yea, by my fay, to God I betake thee.  
*Everyman.* Farewell, good *Fellowship*; for this my  
heart is sore;  
Adieu for ever, I shall see thee no more.  
*Fellowship.* In faith, *Everyman*, farewell now at the  
end;  
For you I will remember that parting is mourning.  
*Everyman.* Alack! shall we thus depart indeed?  
Our Lady, help, without any more comfort,  
Lo, *Fellowship* forsaketh me in my most need:  
For help in this world whither shall I resort?  
*Fellowship* herebefore with me would merry make;  
And now little sorrow for me doth he take.  
It is said, in prosperity men friends may find,  
Which in adversity be full unkind.  
Now whither for succor shall I flee,  
Sith that *Fellowship* hath forsaken me?



In turn Everyman tries in vain to secure the company of his cousin, other relatives of his, Worldly Possession, Good Deeds, Strength, Discretion, Five-Wits, Beauty and Knowledge. All desert him, none have the courage or the will to follow him, but at the very end Good Deeds intercedes for him:

*Everyman.* Methinketh, alas, that I must be gone,  
To make my reckoning and my debts pay,  
For I see my time is nigh spent away.  
Take example, all ye that this do hear or see,  
How they that I loved best do forsake me,  
Except my *Good Deeds* that bideth truly.

*Good Deeds.* All earthly things is but vanity:  
*Beauty, Strength, and Discretion*, do man forsake,  
Foolish friends and kinsmen, that fair spake,  
All fleeth save *Good Deeds*, and that am I.

*Everyman.* Have mercy on me, God most mighty;  
And stand by me, thou Mother and Maid, holy *Mary*.

*Good Deeds.* Fear not, I will speak for thee.

*Everyman.* Here I cry God mercy.

*Good Deeds.* Short our end, and minish our pain;  
Let us go and never come again.

*Everyman.* Into thy hands, Lord, my soul I commend;  
Receive it, Lord, that it be not lost;  
As thou me boughtest, so me defend,  
And save me from the fiend's boast,  
That I may appear with that blessed host  
That shall be saved at the day of doom.

*In manus tuas—of might's most  
For ever—commendo spiritum meum.*

*Knowledge.* Now hath he suffered that we all shall endure;

The *Good Deeds* shall make all sure.  
Now hath he made ending;  
Methinketh that I hear angels sing  
And make great joy and melody,

Where *Everyman's* soul received shall be.

*Angel.* Come, excellent elect spouse to Jesu:

Hereabove thou shalt go

Because of thy singular virtue:

Now the soul is taken the body fro;

Thy reckoning is crystal-clear.

Now shalt thou into the heavenly sphere,

Unto the which all ye shall come

That liveth well before the day of doom.

*Doctor.* This moral men may have in mind;

Ye hearers, take it of worth, old and young,

And forsake pride, for he deceiveth you in the end,

And remember *Beauty, Five-wits, Strength, and Discretion,*

• They all at the last do *Everyman* forsake,

Save his *Good Deeds*, there doth he take.

But beware, and they be small

Before God, he hath no help at all.

None excuse may be there for *Everyman*:

Alas, how shall he do then?

For after death amends may no man make,

For then mercy and pity do him forsake.

If his reckoning be not clear when he do come,

God will say—*ite maledicti in ignem aeternum*.

And he that hath his account whole and sound,

High in heaven he shall be crowned;

Unto which place God bring us all thither

That we may live body and soul together.

Thereto help the Trinity,

Amen, say ye, for saint *Charity*.

IV. INTERLUDES. The Interludes of John Heywood, who wrote about the middle of the sixteenth century, form a real transition to the Elizabethan drama. The author's position at court was somewhat unusual, as he appears to have been not only a courtier, but also a jester, a great favorite with Queen

Mary, largely perhaps because of a community in religious belief. He was also popular with Henry VIII and Edward VI, because of his wit and skill in music, but when Elizabeth ascended the throne he retired from court into exile, and finally died abroad. His wit was caustic, and he is known as "the Old Epigrammatist," for he was the first to attempt the epigram and the first to write an Interlude in English. Some of his dramatic compositions were produced before 1531, and these represented with considerable skill and talent amusing familiar incidents in the form of broad and coarse farces. One called *The Four P's* concerns a dispute between a Palmer, a Pardoner, a Poticary and a Pedler, who are the only characters. They enter into a contest to determine who can tell the greatest falsehood, and the dispute waxes warm until the Palmer happens to say accidentally that he never saw a woman out of patience in his life. All agree that this is the greatest lie they ever heard, and so the play terminates with much laughter. Among his other Interludes are *The Play of Love*, *Johann the Husband*, *Tyb the Wife* and *The Pardoner and the Frere*.

The best, however, is *The Play of the Weather*, printed in 1533. In a speech not unlike the preamble to one of Henry VIII's Acts of Parliament, Jupiter announces that things have hitherto gone wrong in several respects, and that with the permission of Parliament he is going to correct them:

Before our presence, in our high parliament,  
Both gods and goddesses of all degrees  
Hath late assembled, by common assent,  
For the redress of certain enormities  
Bred among them, thorow extremities  
Abused in each to other of them all,  
Namely, to purpose, in these most special:

Our foresaid father Saturn, and Phoebus,  
Aeolus and Phoebe, these four by name,  
Whose natures, not only, so far contrarious,  
But also of malice each other to defame,  
Have long time abused, right far out of frame,  
The due course of all their constellations,  
To the great damage of all earthly nations.

Whereupon the delinquents surrender their  
offices to Jupiter, just as the abbots surrendered their monasteries to Henry VIII. In fact, this is but one instance of the political satire that runs through the play:

They have, in conclusion, wholly surrendered  
Into our hands, as much as concerning  
All manner weathers by them engendered,  
The full of their powers, for term everlasting,  
To set such order as standeth with our pleasing,  
Which thing, as of our part, no part required,  
But of all their parties right humbly desired.

Jupiter, looking about for a messenger, tries  
to employ Merry Report:

To a certain widow this day was I sent,  
Whose husband departed without her witting,  
A special good lover and she his own sweeting,  
To whom, at my coming, I cast such a figure,  
Mingling the matter according to my nature,  
That when we departed, above all other things,  
She thanked me heartily for my merry tidings.

After the proclamation has been issued indicating that Jupiter will first reform the weather, men come from every direction to lay their complaints, and each, of course, asks for the kind of weather that will serve him best. Finally, the climax is reached in the absurd application of a small boy:

Forsooth, sir, my mind is this, at few words,  
All my pleasure is in catching of birds,  
And making of snowballs and throwing the same;  
For the which purpose to have set in frame,  
With my godfather god I would fain have spoken,  
Desiring him to have sent me by some token  
Where I might have had great frost for my pitfalls,  
And plenty of snow to make my snowballs.  
This once had, boys' lives be such as no man leads.  
Oh, to see my snowballs light on my fellows' heads,  
And to hear the birds how they flicker their wings  
In the pitfall! I say it passeth all things.  
Sir, if ye be god's servant, or his kinsman,  
I pray you help me in this if you can.

Jupiter is so puzzled by the requests that he decides to regulate the weather as he sees fit; the petitioners thank him cordially, and everything remains as it was before he announced his intention to reform.

V. THE FIRST COMEDIES. Nicholas Udall (1505-1556) was an English schoolmaster, born in Hampshire. He was graduated from Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and during the Reformation was active for the Protestants, but when Queen Mary came to the throne he changed his faith. For seventeen years he was head-master of the famous preparatory school of Eton, and from 1554 to his death

held the same post in the even more famous Westminster School. As a writer he was noted for his translations, essays and verses in Latin and English, but more than all else for *Ralph Roister Doister*, the first English comedy, composed, in all probability, to be acted by the boys at Eton.

The play is written on Roman models, and is a clever adaptation of *Miles Gloriosus* by Plautus. Its chief merit lies in its entire freedom from indecency and the smooth, regular progress of the plot, but it has little of literary value, though undoubtedly it might create mirth by the acts of the principal characters. It is in long and irregularly measured rhyme, of which we can give a brief specimen, taken from a speech of Dame Custance regarding the difficulty of preserving a good reputation:

Lord, how necessary it is now of days  
That each body live uprightly all manner ways,  
For let never so little a gap be open,  
And be sure of this, the worst shall be spoken,  
How innocent stand I in this for deed or thought,  
And yet see what mistrust toward me it hath wrought,  
But thou, Lord, knowest all folks' thoughts and eke intentions,

And thou art the deliverer of all innocents.

Ralph Roister Doister meets a widow, Dame Christian Custance, at a dinner, and falls in love with her. He enlists the services of his friend, Mathew Merygreeke, and they have an interview with Margerie Mumblecrust, Dame Custance's nurse. She takes a letter to her mistress, but as the latter is affianced to

Gawyn Goodluck, she refuses to open and read it. A little later Roister Doister sends his boy with a token and a ring for his lady love. The nurse refuses to take them, but he soon meets Dame Custance's boy and two maidens, who take the ring to her. She scolds them for accepting tokens from an unknown person, and they promise not to do it again. Merygreeke then secures an interview with Dame Custance, but it turns out unhappily, for she positively refuses to receive any of Roister Doister's advances. Merygreeke reads, as follows, the letter which Roister Doister sent to Dame Custance:

To mine own dear coney bird, sweetheart, and pigsny,  
Good Mistress Custance, present these by and by:  
Sweet mistress, where as I love you nothing at all,  
Regarding your riches and substance chief of all,  
For your personage, beauty, demeanor and wit,  
I commend me unto you never a whit.  
Sorry to hear report of your good welfare,  
For (as I hear say) such your conditions are,  
That ye be worthy favor of no living man,  
To be abhorred of every honest man.  
To be taken for a woman inclined to vice.  
Nothing at all to virtue giving her due price.  
Wherefore, concerning marriage, ye are thought  
Such a fine paragon, as ne'er honest man bought.  
And now by these presents I do you advertise  
That I am minded to marry you in no wise.  
For your goods and substance, I could be content  
To take you as ye are. If ye mind to be my wife,  
Ye shall be assured for the time of my life,  
I will keep you right well, from good raiment and fare,  
Ye shall not be kept but in sorrow and care.  
Ye shall in no wise live at your own liberty,  
Do and say what ye lust, ye shall never please me,

But when ye are merry, I will be all sad;  
When ye are sorry, I will be very glad.  
When ye seek your heart's ease, I will be unkind.  
At no time in me shall ye much gentleness find.  
But all things contrary to your will and mind,  
Shall be done: otherwise I will not be behind  
To speak. And as for all them that would do you wrong  
I will so help and maintain, ye shall not live long.  
Nor any foolish dolt shall cumber you but I.  
I, whoe'er say nay, will stick by you till I die,  
Thus, good Mistress Custance, the Lord you save and keep,  
From me, Roister Doister, whether I wake or sleep.  
Who favoreth you no less (ye may be bold)  
Than this letter purporteth, which ye have unfold.

Roister Doister claims that he never wrote this letter, and sends for his shrivner, who says that the letter, if properly read, could not be a better one. The shrivner then reads the letter as it was originally written:

To mine own dear coney bird, sweetheart, and pigsny,  
Good Mistress Custance, present these by and by:  
Sweet mistress, whereas I love you, nothing at all  
Regarding your riches and substance: chief of all  
For your personage, beauty, demeanor, and wit  
I commend me unto you: never a whit  
Sorry to hear report of your good welfare.  
For (as I hear say) such your conditions are,  
That ye be worthy of favor: of no living man  
To be abhorred: of every honest man  
To be taken for a woman inclined to vice  
Nothing at all: to virtue giving her due price.  
Wherefore concerning marriage, ye are thought  
Such a fine paragon, as ne'er honest man bought.  
And now by these presents I do you advertise,  
That I am minded to marry you: in no wise  
For your goods and substance: I can be content  
To take you as you are: if ye will be my wife,



Ye shall be assured for the time of my life,  
I will keep you right well: from good raiment and fare,  
Ye shall not be kept: but in sorrow and care  
Ye shall in no wise live: at your own liberty,  
Do and say what ye lust: ye shall never please me  
But when ye are merry: I will be all sad  
When ye are sorry: I will be very glad  
When ye seek your heart's ease: I will be unkind  
At no time: in me shall ye much gentleness find.  
But all things contrary to your will and mind  
Shall be done otherwise: I will not be behind  
To speak: and as for all them that would do you wrong,  
(I will so help and maintain ye) shall not live long.  
Nor any foolish dolt shall cumber you, but I  
I, whoe'er say nay, will stick by you till I die.  
Thus, good Mistress Custance, the Lord you save and keep,  
From me, Roister Doister, whether I wake or sleep,  
Who favoereth you no less (ye may be bold),  
Than this letter purporteth, which ye have unfold.

Goodluck's servant comes to Dame Custance's home to report that his master is on his way thither. While they are conversing, Roister Doister and Merygreeke approach. Although Dame Custance absolutely declines their offers, Sym Suresby, the servant, grows a little suspicious and confides in Tristram Trustie, a friend of his master. Roister Doister threatens to destroy his mistress's home and herself, and retires to make preparations to attack her. She calls Trustie, and soon Merygreeke meets them. He tells them that although he is a friend to Roister Doister, still he has been only in fun, for he has been aware of Dame Custance's affection for Goodluck. Dame Custance and her maidens repel Roister

Doister when he arrives, and Merygreeke, declaring that he is striking Dame Custance, attacks Roister Doister until he flees. Goodluck arrives, and has the following conversation with Dame Custance:

*C. Custance.* I come forth to see and hearken for news good,

For about this hour is the time of likelihood,  
That Gawyn Goodluck by the sayings of Suresby  
Would be at home, and lo, yond I see him, I.

What! Gawyn Goodluck, the only hope of my life!

Welcome home, and kiss me your true espoused wife.

*G. Good.* Nay, soft, Dame Custance; I must first, by your license,

See whether all things be clear in your conscience.

I hear of your doings to me very strange.

*C. Custance.* What fear ye, that my faith towards you should change?

*G. Good.* I must needs mistrust ye be elsewhere entangled.

For I hear that certain men with you have wrangled  
About the promise of marriage by you to them made.

*C. Custance.* Could any man's report your mind therein persuade?

*G. Good.* Well, ye must therein declare yourself to stand clear,

Else I and you, Dame Custance, may not join this year.

*C. Custance.* Then would I were dead, and fair laid in my grave.

Ah, Suresby, is this the honesty that ye have?

To hurt me with your report, not knowing the thing.

*Sym Sure.* If ye be honest my words can hurt you nothing.

But what I heard and saw, I might not but report.

*C. Custance.* Ah, Lord, help poor widows, destitute of comfort!

Truly, most dear spouse, nought was done but for pastance.

*G. Good.* But such kind of sporting is homely dalliance.

*C. Custance.* If ye knew the truth, ye would take all in good part.

*G. Good.* By your leave, I an. not half well skilled in that art.

*C. Custance.* It was none but Roister Doister, that foolish mome.

*G. Good.* Yea, Custance, better (they say) a bad 'scuse than none.

*C. Custance.* Why, Tristram Trustie, sir, your true and faithful friend,

Was privy both to the beginning and the end.

Let him be the judge, and for me testify.

*G. Good.* I will the more credit that he shall verify,

And because I will the truth know e'en as it is,

I will to him myself, and know all without miss.

Come on, Sym Suresby, that before my friend thou may

Avouch the same words, which thou didst to me say.

Trustie testifies to the fidelity of Dame Custance, and the comedy ends when Goodluck forgives Roister Doister.

While there is some question as to which is really the second comedy, it is not impossible that the place should be given to the well-known *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, a rather interesting farce-comedy, in verse similar to that of *Roister Doister*, though in plot and dialogue much inferior. However, many types are presented vividly. Gammer, while mending Hodge's breeches, dropped her needle, which was lawlessly seized by Gib, the cat. After many mirth-provoking incidents, the needle is finally recovered. That the loss of it should have been so serious a matter seems absurd to

us, but needles were not common in those days.  
What the peasant husband thinks of his wife's  
carelessness is thus expressed:

Whereto served your hands and eyes, but this your neele  
to keep?

What devil had you else to do? ye kept, ich wot, no sheep.  
Cham fain abroad to dig and delve, in water, mire, and  
clay,

Sossing and possing in the dirt still from day to day.

A hundred things that be abroad, cham yet to see them  
wele,

And four of you sit idle at home, and cannot keep a neele!

In one place Gammer Gurton tells the serv-  
ing-boy how to find the family candle:

Go, hie thee soon,

And grope behind the old brass pan, which thing when  
thou hast done,

There shalt thou find an old shoe, wherein if thou look  
well,

Thee shalt find lying an inch of an old tallow candle,

Light it, and bring it tite away.

Our candle is at an end, my neele is still where it was.

There is one drinking song which ranks high:

I cannot eat but little meat,

My stomach is not good;

But sure I think that I can drink

With him that wears a hood.

Though I go bare, take ye no care,

I nothing am a-cold;

I stuff my skin so full within

Of jolly good ale and old.

Back and side go bare, go bare;

Both foot and hand go cold;

But, belly, God send thee good ale enough,

Whether it be new or old.

I love no roast but a nut-brown toast,  
And a crab laid in the fire;  
And little bread shall do me stead;  
Much bread I nought desire.  
No frost, no snow, no wind, I trow,  
Can hurt me if I wold,  
I am so wrapped, and thoroughly lapped  
Of jolly good ale and old.  
Back and side, etc.

And Tib, my wife, that as her life  
Loveth well good ale to seek,  
Full oft drinks she, till ye may see  
The tears run down her cheek;  
Then doth she troul to me the bowl,  
Even as a maltworm should,  
And saith, "Sweetheart, I took my part  
Of this jolly good ale and old."  
Back and side, etc.

Now let them drink till they nod and wink,  
Even as good fellows should do;  
They shall not miss to have the bliss  
Good ale doth bring men to.  
And all poor souls that have scoured bowls,  
Or have them lustily trouled,  
God save the lives of them and their wives,  
Whether they be young or old.  
Back and side, etc.

VI. THE FIRST TRAGEDY. The first use of blank verse, which subsequently became the established medium for the English stage, appeared in the first English tragedy, *Ferrex and Porrex*, better known as *Gorboduc*. Whether this tragedy was produced by the collaboration of Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, two eminent statesmen of Elizabeth's reign, or is wholly the work of the latter, appears uncer-

tain, but the weight of evidence attributes the first three acts to Norton and the last two to Sackville.

Thomas Sackville (1536-1608), Baron Buckhurst, afterwards created the first Earl of Dorset, was one of the favorites of Queen Elizabeth, and was also prominent during the reign of James I of England. His reputation as a poet was considerable, and his *Induction* is a remarkable production, "which unites," as Mr. Hallam remarks, "the school of Chaucer and Lydgate to *The Faerie Queene*." It is chiefly distinguished for its powerful sense of gloom and sorrow, as, for instance, in the description of the Duke of Buckingham which appears in *Richard III*:

Then first came Henry, Duke of Buckingham,  
His cloak of black all pilled, and quite forworn,  
Wringing his hands, and Fortune oft doth blame,  
Which of a duke had made him now her scorn;  
With ghastly looks, as one in manner lorn,  
Oft spread his arms, stretched hands he joins as fast,  
With rueful cheer, and vapored eyes upcast.

His cloak he rent, his manly breast he beat;  
His hair all torn, about the place it lay:  
My heart so molt to see his grief so great,  
As feelingly, methought, it dropped away:  
His eyes they whirled about withouten stay:  
With stormy sighs the place did so complain,  
As if his heart at each had burst in twain.

Thrice he began to tell his doleful tale,  
And thrice the sighs did swallow up his voice;  
At each of which he shrieked so withal,  
As though the heavens rived with the noise;

Till at the last, recovering his voice,  
Supping the tears that all his breast berained,  
On cruel Fortune weeping thus he plained.

The story of *Gorboduc* is found in Layamon's *Brut*. Gorboduc divides his kingdom between his sons, Ferrex and Porrex, but each aspires to be sole ruler. In the civil war which follows, Porrex kills Ferrex and in turn is slain by his mother, Videna, after which the indignant people kill both Videna and Gorboduc. This extinguishes the line of Brutus, and the play terminates in anarchy caused by quarrels between the insurgents, the nobles and a Scotch invader. To appreciate the play it must be remembered that it was written with a serious purpose caused by the feeling of the authors that the line of succession would terminate and anarchy fall upon England if Elizabeth failed to marry. The Scotch Invader signified Mary Stuart, and the intimation is that Elizabeth should choose an English consort. Near the end of the play the wise counselor, Eubulus, says:

And this [civil discord] doth grow, when lo! unto the  
prince

Whom death or sudden hap of life bereaves,  
No certain heir remains: such certain heir  
As not all only is the rightful heir,  
But to the realm is surely known to be,  
And truth thereby vested in subjects' hearts  
To owe faith there, where right is known to rest.  
Alas, in parliament what hope can be,  
When is of parliament no hope at all?  
Which though it be assembled by consent,  
Yet is not likely with consent to end.

The ravages of civil war are vividly described:

And thou, O Britain, whilom in renown,  
Whilom in wealth and fame, shall thus be torn,  
Dismembered thus, and thus be rent in twain,  
Thus wasted and defaced, spoiled and destroyed:  
These be the fruits your civil wars will bring!  
Hereto it comes when kings will not consent  
To grave advice, but follow willful will.  
This is the end when in fond princes' hearts  
Flattery prevails and sage rede [counsel] hath no place.  
These are the plagues when murder is the mean  
To make new heirs unto the royal crown.  
Thus wreak the gods, when that the mother's wrath  
Nought but the blood of her own child may 'suage.  
These mischiefs spring when rebels will arise  
To work revenge and judge their prince's fact.  
This, this ensues when noble men do fail  
In loyal truth, and subjects will be kings.

A true poetic spirit is found in the description of the death of Porrex:

His eyes, even now unclosed,  
Beheld the Queen, and cried to her for help.  
We then, alas! the ladies which that time  
Did there attend, seeing that heinous deed,  
And hearing him oft call the wretched name  
Of mother, and to cry to her for aid,  
Whose direful hand gave him the mortal wound,  
Pitying, alas! for nought else could we do,  
His ruthful end, ran to the woeful bed,  
Despoiled straight his breast, and, all we might,  
Wiped in vain with napkins next at hand,  
The sudden streams of blood that flushed far  
Out of the gaping wound. O what a look,  
O what a rueful steadfast eye, methought,  
He fixed upon my face, which to my death  
Will never part from me, when with a braid  
A deep-fetched sigh he gave, and therewithal,



Clasping his hands, to heaven he cast his sight;  
And straight, pale death pressing within his face,  
The flying ghost his mortal corpse forsook.

While based upon Roman models, the drama violates the unities, and with all its bloodshed lacks passion and incidents. A chorus, in classical style, sums up and moralizes upon the situation at the end of every act. Weak as the play is, it is a great advance in the drama, and it opened the way for those remarkable producers of English plays who immediately preceded Shakespeare.

VII. GEORGE PEELE. We have reached a period in Elizabeth's reign when dramatic writers were so numerous and so productive that it is impossible even to notice all of them. Only a few, in fact, can be considered, and these rather briefly. Yet it would be a great mistake to leave them unmentioned, and one at least who preceded Shakespeare is indubitably great. There are, then, three writers worthy of our thoughtful attention.

Even in his own time George Peele, who probably died in 1596, bore a bad reputation as a frequenter of miserable taverns, a coarse and rude man, a spendthrift, but withal a poet and wit of no mean parts. In company with the latter seems to have been his amiable disposition and his friendliness with everybody. Peele's poetic touch was delicate and sure, and his allusions to nature remind us of Chaucer:

Not Iris in her pride and bravery  
Adorns her arch with such variety;

Nor doth the milk-white way, in frosty night,  
Appear so fair and beautiful in sight  
As does these fields and groves and sweetest bowers,  
Bestrewed and decked with parti-colored flowers.  
Along the bubbling brooks and silver glide  
That at the bottom do in silence slide,  
The water-flowers and lilies on the banks,  
Like blazing comets, burgeon all in ranks;  
Under the hawthorn and the poplar tree  
Where sacred Phoebe may delight to be,  
The primrose and the purple hyacinth,  
The dainty violet, and the wholesome minth,  
The double daisy, and the cowslip, queen  
Of summer flowers, do overpeer the green;  
And round about the valley as ye pass,  
Ye may ne see for peeping flowers the grass,  
That well the mighty Juno, and the rest,  
May boldly think to be a welcome guest  
On Ida hills, when, to approve the thing,  
The Queen of Flowers prepares a second spring.

However, it is purely as a dramatist that he is important in English literature. Beside *The Arraignment of Paris*, *The Old Wives' Tale* and *David and Bethsabe*, he wrote a number of other dramas that in his time were highly popular. *The Arraignment of Paris* tells the old classic story with ingenious variations. Having improperly awarded the apple to Venus, Paris is indicted, and Diana retries the case, awarding the apple to Eliza (Queen Elizabeth), brilliantly described as follows:

She giveth laws of justice and of peace;  
And on her head, as fits her fortune best,  
She wears a wreath of laurel, gold, and palm;  
Her robes of purple and of scarlet dye;  
Her veil of white, as best befits a maid:

Her ancestors live in the House of Fame ;  
 She giveth arms of happy victory,  
 And flowers to deck her lions crowned with gold.  
 This peerless nymph, whom heaven and earth beloved,  
 This paragon, this only, this is she  
 In whom do meet so many gifts in one,  
 On whom our country gods so often gaze  
 In honor of whose name the Muses sigh.

The following song, called *Cupid's Curse*, is from the same source :

*Oenone.* Fair, and fair, and twice so fair,  
                   As fair as any may be,  
           The fairest Shepherd on our green,  
           A love for any lady.

*Paris.* Fair, and fair, and twice so fair,  
                   As fair as any may be,  
           Thy love is fair for thee alone,  
           And for no other lady.

*Oen.* My love is fair, my love is gay,  
       And fresh as bin the flowers in May,  
       And of my love my roundelay,  
       My merry, merry, merry roundelay,  
       Concludes with Cupid's curse :  
       They that do change old love for new,  
       Pray gods they change for worse.

*Both.*    { Fair, and fair, etc. }  
               { Fair, and fair, etc. } (*repeated*).

*Oen.* My love can pipe, my love can sing,  
       My love can many a pretty thing,  
       And of his lovely praises ring  
       My merry, merry, merry roundelays.  
       Amen to Cupid's curse :  
       They that do change old love for new,  
       Pray gods they change for worse.

*Both.*    { Fair, and fair, etc. }  
               { Fair, and fair, etc. } (*repeated*).

*The Old Wives' Tale* is remarkable chiefly as having suggested *Comus* to Milton. Always hasty and erratic from the irregular life he led, Peele fell short of the finish and grace which he might have given to his lines. Nevertheless, there are rich, high-sounding speeches which remind us of those in Shakespeare's historical plays, as, for instance, in *Edward I*:

Illustrious England, ancient seat of kings,  
Whose chivalry hath royalized thy fame,  
That sounding bravely through terrestrial vale,  
Proclaiming conquests, spoils, and victories,  
Rings glorious echoes through the farthest world;  
What warlike nation, trained in feats of arms,  
What barbarous people, stubborn or untamed,  
What climate under the meridian signs,  
Or frozen zone under his brumal plage,  
Erst have not quaked and trembled at the name  
Of Britain and her mighty conquerors?  
Her neighbor-nations, as Scotland, Denmark, France,  
Awed with their deeds and jealous of her arms,  
Have begged defensive and offensive leagues.  
Thus Europe, rich and mighty in her kings,  
Hath feared brave England, dreadful in her kings,  
And now, to eternize Albion's champions,  
Equivalent with Trojans' ancient fame,  
Comes lovely Edward from Jerusalem,  
Veering before the wind, ploughing the sea,  
His stretched sails filled with the breath of men,  
That through the world admire his manliness.

In many respects Peele's best play is *Love of King David and Fair Bethsabe*, which he seems to have written in one of his best moods. Some of the scenes show great richness of fancy. The following is the prologue:

Of Israel's sweetest singer now I sing,  
His holy style and happy victories;  
Whose Muse was dipt in that inspiring dew,  
Archangels 'stilled from the breath of Jove,  
Decking her temples with the glorious flowers  
Heaven rained on tops of Sion and Mount Sinai.  
Upon the bosom of his ivory lute  
The cherubim and angels laid their breasts;  
And when his consecrated fingers struck  
The golden wires of his ravishing harp,  
He gave alarum to the host of heaven,  
That, winged with lightning, brake the clouds, and cast  
Their crystal armor at his conquering feet.  
Of this sweet poet, Jove's musician,  
And of his beauteous son, I press to sing;  
Then help, divine Adonai, to conduct,  
Upon the wings of my well-tempered verse,  
The hearers' minds above the towers of heaven,  
And guide them so in this thrice haughty flight,  
Their mounting feathers scorch not with the fire  
That none can temper but thy holy hand:  
To thee for succor flies my feeble Muse,  
And at thy feet her iron pen doth use.

An excellent piece of work is the following:

BETHSABE *and her maid bathing.* KING DAVID *above.*  
*The Song.*

Hot sun, cool fire, tempered with sweet air,  
Black shade, fair nurse, shadow my white hair.  
Shine, sun; burn, fire; breathe, air, and ease me;  
Black shade, fair nurse, shroud me and please me;  
Shadow—my sweet nurse—keep me from burning,  
Make not my glad cause, cause of mourning.  
Let not my beauty's fire  
Inflame unstaidd desire,  
Nor pierce any bright eye  
That wandereth lightly.

*Bethsabe.* Come, gentle Zephyr, tricked with those per-  
fumes,

That erst in Eden sweetened Adam's love,  
And stroke my bosom with the silken fan :  
This shade—sun-proof—is yet no proof for thee ;  
Thy body, smoother than this waveless spring,  
And purer than the substance of the same,  
Can creep through that his lances cannot pierce  
Thou and thy sister, soft and sacred Air,  
Goddess of life and governess of health,  
Keeps every fountain fresh and arbor sweet ;  
No brazen gate her passage can repulse,  
Nor bushy thicket bar thy subtle breath.  
Then deck thee with thy loose delightsome robes,  
And on thy wings bring delicate perfumes,  
To play the wanton with us through the leaves.

*David.* What tunes, what words, what looks, what  
wonders pierce  
My soul, incensed with a sudden fire !  
What tree, what shade, what spring, what paradise,  
Enjoys the beauty of so fair a dame ?  
Fair Eva, placed in perfect happiness,  
Lending her praise-notes to the liberal heavens,  
Struck with the accents of archangels' tunes,  
Wrought not more pleasure to her husband's thoughts  
Than this fair woman's words and notes to mine.  
May that sweet plain that bears her pleasant weight,  
Be still enameled with discolored flowers ;  
That precious fount bear sand of purest gold ;  
And for the pebble, let the silver streams  
That pierce earth's bowels to maintain the source,  
Play upon rubies, sapphires, chrysolites ;  
The brim let be embraced with golden curls  
Of moss, that sleeps with sound the waters make  
For joy to feed the fount with their recourse ;  
Let all the grass that beautifies her bower  
Bear manna every morn, instead of dew ;  
Or let the dew be sweeter far than that  
That hangs like chains of pearl on Hermon hill,  
Or balm which tricked from old Aaron's beard.

*Enter CUSAY*

See, Cusay, see the flower of Israel,  
 The fairest daughter that obeys the King,  
 In all the land the Lord subdued to me.  
 Fairer than Isaac's lover at the well,  
 Brighter than inside bark of new-hewn cedar,  
 Sweeter than flames of fine perfumed myrrh;  
 And comelier than the silver clouds that dance  
 On Zephyr's wings before the King of heaven.

*Cusay.* Is it not Bethsabe the Hethite's wife,  
 Urias, now at Rabath siege with Joab?

*Dav.* Go now and bring her quickly to the King;  
 Tell her, her graces hath found grace with him.

*Cus.* I will, my lord. | *Exit.*

*Dav.* Bright Bethsabe shall wash in David's bower  
 In water mixed with purest almond flower,  
 And bathe her beauty in the milk of kids;  
 Bright Bethsabe gives earth to my desires,  
 Verdure to earth, and to that verdure flowers,  
 To flowers sweet odors, and to odors wings,  
 That carry pleasures to the hearts of kings. . . .  
 Now comes my lover tripping like the roe,  
 And brings my longings tangled in her hair:  
 To 'joy her love I'll build a kingly bower,  
 Seated in hearing of a hundred streams,  
 That, for their homage to her sovereign joys,  
 Shall, as the serpents fold into their nests,  
 In oblique turnings wind the nimble waves  
 About the circles of her curious walks,  
 And with their murmur summon easeful Sleep,  
 To lay his golden scepter on her brows.

VIII. ROBERT GREENE. A contemporary of Peele, and a man of similar character or even worse, was Robert Greene. Let him describe himself:

Being at the university of Cambridge, I light among wags as lewd as myself, with whom I consumed the flower of my youth, who drew me to travel into Italy and Spain, in which places I saw and practiced such

villainy as is abominable to declare. Thus by their counsel I sought to furnish myself with coin, which I procured by cunning sleights from my father and my friends, and my mother pampered me so long, and secretly helped me to the oil of angels; so that being then conversant with notable braggarts, boon-companions, and ordinary spendthrifts, that practiced sundry superficial studies, I became as a scion grafted into the same stock, whereby I did absolutely participate of their nature and qualities. At my return into England, I ruffled out in my silks, in the habit of Malcontent, and seemed so discontent that no place would please me to abide in, nor no vocation cause me to stay myself in; but after I had by degrees proceeded master of arts (1583), I left the university, and away to London, where—after I had continued some short time, and driven myself out of credit with sundry of my friends—I became an author of plays and a penner of love-pamphlets, so that I soon grew famous in that quality, that who, for that trade, known so ordinary about London as Robin Greene? Young yet in years, though old in wickedness, I began to resolve that there was nothing bad that was profitable; whereupon I grew so rooted in all mischief, that I had as great a delight in wickedness as sundry have in godliness, and as much felicity I took in villainy as others had in honesty.

In spite of his dissipations, however, Greene retained the ability to write, and his poems, prose writings and plays were extremely popular. Nevertheless, in time he paid the penalty of his ill-spent life and died in extremest poverty from over-indulgence in pickled herrings and Rhenish wine at a supper. For a month he had been supported by the charity of a poor cordwainer, and after his death, according to his own request, his corpse was decorated “with a garland of bays.”



During his last days he wrote a tract called *A Groat's Worth of Wit Bought with a Million of Repentance*, in which he gives some ghostly advice to those "that spend their wit in making plays." The disguise under which he alludes to these writers is thin enough. Of Marlowe he asks, "Why should thy excellent wit, His gift, be so blinded that thou shouldst give no glory to the giver?" All Marlowe's contemporaries charge him with atheism. The ill-natured allusion to Shakespeare is better known: "For there is an upstart crow beautified with our feathers, that, with his *tiger's heart wrapt in a player's hide*, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you; and being an absolute Johannes Fac-totum, is, in his own conceit, the only *Shakes-scene* in a country." Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale* takes its plot from Greene's tale *Pandosto*.

The conclusion of the *Groat's Worth of Wit* is a harrowing picture of the dramatist's own character:

But now return I again to you three [Marlowe, Lodge and Peele], knowing my misery is to you no news: and let me heartily entreat you to be warned by my harms. Delight not, as I have done, in irreligious oaths, despise drunkenness, fly lust, abhor those epicures whose loose life hath made religion loathsome to your ears; and when they soothe you with terms of mastership, remember Robert Greene, whom they have often flattered—perishes for want of comfort. Remember, gentlemen, your lives are like so many light-tapers that are with care delivered to all of you to maintain; these, with wind-puffed wrath,

may be extinguished, with drunkenness put out, with negligence let fall. The fire of my light is now at the last snuff. My hand is tired, and I forced to leave where I would begin; desirous that you should live, though himself be dying.

We have space for a sonnet on *Content*:

Sweet are the thoughts that savor of content:  
The quiet mind is richer than a crown:  
Sweet are the nights in careless slumber spent:  
The poor estate scorns Fortune's angry frown.  
Such sweet content, such minds, such sleep, such bliss,  
Beggars enjoy, when princes oft do miss.  
The homely house that harbors quiet rest,  
The cottage that affords no pride nor care,  
The mean, that 'grees with country music best,  
The sweet consort of mirth's and music's fare.  
Obscured life sets down a type of bliss;  
A mind content both crown and kingdom is.

*Sephestia's Song to Her Child, after Escaping from Shipwreck:*

Mother's wag, pretty boy,  
Father's sorrow, father's joy,  
When thy father first did see  
Such a boy by him and me,  
He was glad, I was woe,  
Fortune changed made him so;  
When he had left his pretty boy,  
Last his sorrow, first his joy.  
Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee;  
When thou art old, there's grief enough for thee.

The wanton smiled, father wept,  
Mother cried, baby leapt;  
More he crowed, more he cried,  
Nature could not sorrow hide;  
He must go, he must kiss  
Child and mother, baby bless,  
For he left his pretty boy,

Father's sorrow, father' joy,  
Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee;  
When thou art old, there's grief enough for thee.

Five plays are known to be Greene's, but he probably wrote many more. The best of all is *The Honorable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*. The plot is double, for one part concerns the loves of Prince Edward and his friend, the Earl of Lincoln, for Margaret, the beautiful daughter of a game-keeper. The second part relates to the philosopher, Roger Bacon, the most learned Englishman of the thirteenth century, whose reputation for magic was the occasion of many wonderful legends and ballads. Bacon and Bungay had constructed a brass head, which they predicted would speak and tell them how to surround England with a wall that would make her proof against all foes. The friar, worn out with his arduous labors, sets his servant Miles to watch the head while the inventor gets a little sleep:

[*Enter FRIAR BACON, with a lighted lamp and a book in his hand, MILES following him, armed in a ridiculous manner, from head to foot.*]

*Bacon* (*drawing the curtains and revealing the brazen head*). Miles, where are you?

*Miles*. Here, here, sir.

*Bacon*. How chance you tarry so long?

*Miles*. Think you that watching the brazen head craves no furniture? I warrant you, sir, I have so armed myself that if all your devils do come, I will not fear them an inch.

*Bacon*. Miles, thou knowest that I have dived into hell,  
And sought the darkest places of the fiends;  
That with my magic spells great Belcephon

Hath left his lodge and kneeled at my cell;  
 That three-formed Luna hid her silver looks,  
 Trembling upon her concave continent.  
 When Bacon read upon his magic book.  
 With seven years tossing necromantic charms,  
 Poring upon dark Hecate's principle,  
 I have framed out a monstrous head of brass,  
 That, by the enchanting forces of the devil,  
 Shall tell out strange and uncouth aphorisms,  
 And girt fair England with a wall of brass.  
 Bungay and I have watched these three-score days,  
 And now our vital spirits crave some rest.  
 Now, Miles, in thee rests Friar Bacon's weal;  
 The honor and renown of all his life  
 Hangs in the watching of this brazen head. . . .  
 This night thou watch, for ere the morning star  
 Sends out his glorious glister in the north,  
 The head will speak; then, Miles, upon thy life,  
 Wake me, for then, by magic art, I'll work  
 To aid my seven years' task with excellence. . . .  
 Draw close the curtains, Miles; now, for thy life,  
 Be watchful and— [He falls asleep.]

*Miles.* So! I thought you'd talk yourself asleep anon, and 'tis no marvel, for Bungay in the days, and he in the nights, have watched ten and fifty days. Now this is the night, and 'tis my task and no more. Heaven bless me! what a goodly head it is, and a nose! You take of *nos* (nose) *autem glorificare*; but *here's* a nose may be called *nos autem popolare*—for the people of the parish. Well, I am well furnished with weapons; now, sir, I will get me down by a post, and make it as good as a watchman to wake me if I chance to slumber. [A great noise of thunder heard.] Up, Miles, to your task; here's some of your master's hobgoblins abroad.

[Thunder—The head speaks.]

*Head.* Time is.

*Miles.* Time is. What, Master Brazen-head, have you such a capital nose and answer you with syllables, Time is? Is this my master's cunning to spend seven years'

study with time is? Well, sir, it may be we shall have same orations anon. I'll watch you as narrowly as ever you were watched. [*Thunder and lightning.*]

*The Head.* Time was.

*Miles.* Well, Friar Bacon, you have spent your seven years' study well, that can make your head speak but two words at once, Time was. Yea, marry, time was when my master was a wise man, but that was before he began to make the brazen head—what! a fresh noise! Take thy pistols in hand, Miles. [*Thunder.*]

*The Head.* Time is past.

[*Flash of lightning, in which a hand appears with hammer that breaks the head.*]

*Miles (in affright).* Master! master! Up! your head speaks! There's such a thunder and lightning that I warrant all Oxford is up in arms. Out of your bed; the latter day is come.

*Bacon (arousing)*—Miles, I come. O passing warily watched! Bacon will make thee next himself in love. When spake the head?

*Miles.* When spake the head? Did you not say that it should tell strange principles of philosophy? Why, sir, it speaks but two words at a time.

*Bacon.* Why, villain, has it spoken oft?

*Miles.* Oft? Ay, marry hath it, thrice; but in all these three times it has uttered only seven words.

*Bacon.* As how?

*Miles.* Marry, sir, the first time it said, Time is, as if Fabius Commentator should have pronounced a sentence; then he said, Time was; and the third time, with thunder and lightning, as in great choler, he cried, Time is past.

*Bacon.* 'Tis past, indeed.

Ay, villain, time is past.

My life, my fame, my glory—all are past.

Bacon, the turrets of thy hope are razed.

Thy seven years' study lieth in the dust,

Thy brazen head lies broken, through a slave

That watched and would not when the head did will.



## CHAPTER IX

### THE ELIZABETHAN AGE (CONTINUED)

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

**T**HE ELIZABETHAN THEATER. The Miracle play, which was performed but once a year, as we have seen, was produced on movable stages, but with the rise of daily representations it became necessary to have permanent play-houses. Owing to the opposition of the authorities to the loose characters who in the beginning acted the parts and to that crowding together of people which might spread contagious diseases, proper houses were slow in appearing. The first performances were usually given in the yards of large inns, where the actors were wont to congregate, and this fact undoubtedly affected the form and structure of the earliest theaters. The first one to be built in London was constructed in 1576 or 1577, and was called *The*

*Theater.* Soon afterward, however, *The Curtain*, *The Rose*, *The Swan* and *The Globe* succeeded, and by the close of the century eleven theaters had been built, chiefly on the southern, or Surrey, bank of the Thames, in order that they might be out of the jurisdiction of the Puritan city government. Of all these theaters the most famous was *The Globe*, so named for its sign, which represented Atlas supporting the world. It was this play-house which was most closely associated with Shakespeare.

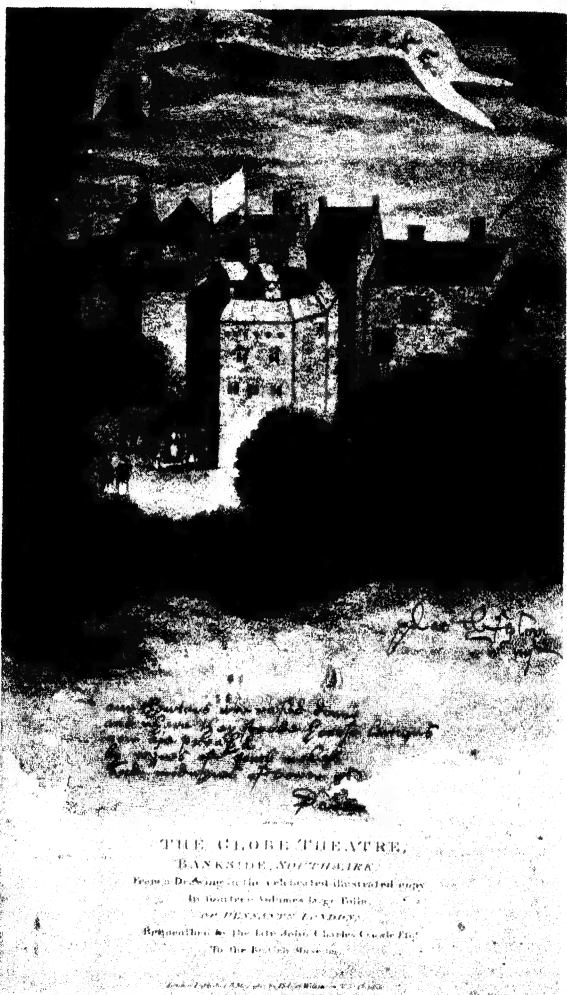
There is in existence a rude drawing of *The Swan*, which shows the stage to be oval in shape and surrounded by boxes. The spectators only were protected from the weather by a tiled roof, and the players were entirely in the open. It is not probable, however, that this arrangement existed long. In the central court, or pit, so named probably because originally it was the scene of cock fighting, the common people stood to view the play, while the boxes were occupied by the aristocracy. A portion of the stage frequently was occupied by wits and gallants, who at times made audible comments upon the acting. In some plays provision was made for these interruptions, and the action depended not a little upon these assumed spectators. Between the acts or during changes in costume the stage was shut off from the spectators by a movable curtain which ran upon a wire. There was no painted scenery, and the only indication of the scene was a placard set up on the stage, on which

was printed, "This is a forest" or "This is a prison." About 1650, however, movable scenery appeared. Actors generally were held in low esteem, and no women were allowed upon the stage. Even in the production of Shakespeare's plays, good-looking boys represented the female characters. That these were not well rendered is probable, but there were during this epoch some actors of remarkable skill and power: Edward Alleyn, for instance, who was well educated; Tarlton and Knill, who had been tavern-keepers; and Burbage, who had been a joiner. However, the production of the masterly plays of Marlowe and Shakespeare made a demand for men of genius, and, after Puritan opposition had somewhat subsided, the social position of the actor noticeably improved. Plays usually began in the afternoon, and when lights were needed candles were used. That they might burn properly, these were snuffed at intervals by attendants, whose skill was generously applauded by those humorously inclined.

The Elizabethan theater was not exactly a popular institution, but was directly under the patronage of the Queen and wealthy nobles. In fact, the Queen's fondness for dramatic representation did much to extend the popularity of the play and to encourage both writers and actors. Moreover, as she frequently required to be entertained while on her progress through the kingdom, the love of the drama was extended into the provinces.



II. MARLOWE'S LIFE. The greatest of Shakespeare's predecessors was unquestionably Christopher Marlowe, or "Kit," as he was familiarly called, a young genius who died at twenty-nine. He was a contemporary of Peele, Greene and Shakespeare, and though a trifle younger than the last, he began writing earlier, and when he died very few of Shakespeare's plays had been completed. Marlowe was born at Canterbury in 1563, of a comparatively obscure family, but, having attracted the attention of some wealthy local gentlemen, he was enabled to obtain an excellent education and complete his college course at Cambridge. He lived much the same life as his friends, but his fervid genius, high aspirations and inordinate ambition forced him ahead of them all. In 1593 he was engaged in a disreputable quarrel with a friend, Francis Archer, and, having drawn his poniard, the latter seized him by the wrist and turned the blade in such a manner that it entered Marlowe's head, and, "notwithstanding all the means of surgery that could be brought, he shortly afterward died of his wound." His disgraceful end increased the opposition of the Puritans, and for a long time made his name the symbol of wickedness. In the estimate of his genius, however, these things can be taken into account only as evidence of the superiority of his power and the precocity of his intellect. The finest tribute paid to him was written by his contemporary and fellow dramatist, Michael Drayton:



From an Old Print

THE GLOBE THEATRE



Next Marlowe, bathed in the Thespian springs,  
 Had in him those brave translunary things  
 That the first poets had : his raptures were  
 All air and fire, which made his verses clear ;  
 For that fine madness still he did retain,  
 Which rightly should possess a poet's brain.

III. “TAMBURLAINE THE GREAT.” Marlowe's first drama, *Tamburlaine the Great*, written in part, at least, before he left college, is interesting in that it was the first play in blank verse to be produced in a public theater. Before his time this medium had been used only in private performances at court or before schools and colleges. Tamburlaine, the hero of the play, is a rebellious shepherd, who, in his boundless ambition and utter fearlessness decides to become King of Persia. Theridamos, one of the captains of the King of Persia, has been sent to take Tamburlaine prisoner, but the latter persuades the envoy to desert his master :

Thou valiant man of Persia,  
 I see the folly of thy Emperor ;  
 Art thou but captain of a thousand horse,  
 That by characters graven in thy brows,  
 And by thy martial face and stout aspect,  
 Deserves to have the leading of a host ?  
 Forsake thy King, and do but join with me,  
 And we will triumph over all the world.  
 I hold the Fates, bound fast in iron chains,  
 And with my hand turn Fortune's wheel about,  
 And sooner shall the sun fall from his sphere  
 Than Tamburlaine be slain or overcome.  
 Draw forth thy sword, thou mighty man at arms,  
 Intending but to raze my charmed skin,

And Jove himself will stretch his hand from heaven  
To ward the blow and shield me safe from harm.

If thou wilt stay with me, renowned man,  
And lead thy thousand horse, with my conduct,  
Besides thy share of this Egyptian prize,  
Three thousand horse shall sweat with martial spoil  
Of conquered kingdoms, and of cities sacked;  
We both will walk upon the lofty cliffs,  
And Christian merchants, that with Russian sterns  
Plough up huge furrows in the Caspian Sea,  
Shall sail to us as lords of all the lakes;  
Both we will reign as consuls of the earth,  
And mighty kings shall be our senators.  
Jove sometimes masked in a shepherd's weed,  
And by those steps that he has scaled the heavens,  
May we become immortal as the gods.  
Join with me now in this my mean estate,  
(I call it mean, because, being yet obscure,  
The nations far removed admire me not,)  
And when my name and honor shall be spread  
As far as Boreas claps his brazen wings,  
Or fair Bootes sends his cheerful light,  
Then shalt thou be competitor with me,  
And sit with Tamburlaine in all his majesty.

Ben Jonson speaks of "Marlowe's mighty line," and the preceding extract justifies the epithet, even if his tendency to rant and exaggeration is a drawback. Still, Marlowe's conception of Tamburlaine might justify some extravagance, and as we read his lines we are inclined to feel that the character he draws is great enough to justify such language:

Set me to scale the high pyramides,  
And thereon set the diadem of France;  
I'll either rend it with my nails to nought,

Or mount the top with my aspiring wings,  
Although my downfall be the deepest hell.

Tamburlaine himself is the only interesting figure in the play, which has no plot other than a history of the hero's repeated conquests, and it terminates at the death of the great man, whose love speeches even are filled with hypocrisy:

Proud fury and intolerable fit  
That dares torment the body of my love,  
And scourge the scourge of the immortal gods!  
Now are those spheres, where Cupid used to sit,  
Wounding the world with wonder and with love,  
Sadly supplied with pale and ghastly death,  
Whose darts do pierce the center of my soul.  
Her sacred beauty hath enchanted Heaven;  
And had she lived before the siege of Troy,  
Helen, whose beauty summoned Greece to arms,  
And drew a thousand ships to Tenedos,  
Had not been named in Homer's *Iliad*.

IV. “THE JEW OF MALTA.” A boundless passion for wealth is the keynote of Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, whose hero, Barabas, reminds us of Skylock, though there is really little in common between the two. In the opening soliloquy, the Jew says:

As for those Sanaites, and the men of Uz,  
That bought my Spanish oils and wines of Greece,  
Here have I pursed their paltry silverlings.  
Fie! What a trouble 'tis to count this trash!  
Well fare the Arabians, who so richly pay  
The things they traffic for with wedge of gold,  
Whereof a man may easily in a day  
Tell that which may maintain him all his life.

The needy groom that never fingered groat  
Would make a miracle of this much coin.  
But he whose steel-barred coffers are crammed full,  
And all his lifetime hath been tired,  
Wearying his fingers' ends with telling it,  
Would in his age be loth to labor so,  
And for a pound to sweat himself to death.  
Give me the merchants of the Indian mines  
That trade in metal of the purest mold;  
The wealthy Moor that in the Eastern rocks  
Without control can pick his riches up,  
And in his house heap pearls like pebble-stones,  
Receive them free, and sell them by the weight:  
Bags of fiery opals, sapphires, amethysts,  
Jacinths, hard topaz, grass-green emeralds,  
Beauteous rubies, sparkling diamonds,  
And seld-seen costly stones of so great price  
As one of them indifferently rated,  
And of a carat of this quantity,  
May serve, in peril of calamity,  
To ransom great kings from captivity.  
This is the ware wherein consists my wealth,  
And thus methinks should men of judgment frame  
Their means of traffic from the vulgar trade,  
And as their wealth increaseth, so inclose  
Infinite riches in a little room.

Barabas has scarcely finished his bragging when he is summoned before the Knights of St. John at Malta, who are in distress because the Turks are requiring additional tribute, and some person has suggested that Barabas and his countrymen, being wealthy, might advance the money. When Barabas refuses to pay willingly, he is despoiled of his property, but his daughter, Abigail, acting under his instructions, enters a nunnery as a convert for the

purpose of carrying off many priceless jewels which have been concealed there. Although she helps Barabas to recover his money, she becomes a real convert to the faith, and thereafter Barabas runs mad, poisons his daughter and meets his end by being thrown into a boiling caldron that he has prepared for a Turkish prince. His final speech, in which he confesses his crime and closes his career, contains the following lines:

Then, Barabas, breathe forth thy latest fate,  
And in the fury of thy torments, strive  
To end thy life with resolution :  
Know, governor, 'tis I that slew thy son ;  
I framed the challenge that did make them meet.  
Know, Calymath, I aimed thy overthrow ;  
And had I but escaped this stratagem,  
I would have brought confusion on you all,  
Damned Christian dogs, and Turkish infidels.  
But now begins the extremity of heat  
To pinch me with intolerable pangs.  
Die, life ; fly, soul ; tongue, curse thy fill, and die. [Dies.

In spite of the ferocity of the principal character and the tragic intensity of the scenes, Marlowe fails to be convincing, and the play falls flat from the very superabundance of intensity.

V. “EDWARD II.” Greatly superior to the *Jew of Malta* and to the *Massacre of Paris*, upon which we shall make no further comment, is *Edward II*, a noble historical drama with ably-drawn characters. The action is vigorous and the plot well managed; the play is generally faithful to history, and the weak and



amiable Edward is cleverly drawn, while the dismal scenes which mark Edward's fall and murder are full of poignant pathos. The death scene of *Edward II*, to quote Charles Lamb, "moves pity and terror beyond any scene, ancient or modern." Though this may be extravagant praise, yet there is some justification for the words.

We subjoin an extract from the scene :

*Scene—Berkeley Castle. The KING is left alone with*  
*LIGHTBORN, a murderer.*

*Edward.* Who 's there? what light is that? wherefore com'st thou?

*Lightborn.* To comfort you, and bring you joyful news.

*Edw.* Small comfort finds poor Edward in thy looks!

Villain, I know thou com'st to murder me.

*Light.* To murder you, my most gracious lord!

Far is it from my heart to do you harm.

The Queen sent me to see how you were used,

For she relents at this your misery :

And what eyes can refrain from shedding tears,

To see a King in this most piteous state.

*Edw.* Weep'st thou already? list a while to me,

And then thy heart, were it as Gurney's is,

Or as Matrevis' hewn from the Caucasus,

Yet will it melt, ere I have done my tale.

This dungeon where they keep me is a sink

Wherein the filth of all the castle falls.

*Light.* O villains!

*Edw.* And there, in mire and puddle, have I stood

This ten days' space; and lest that I should sleep,

One plays continually upon a drum.

They give me bread and water, being a King;

So that, for want of sleep and sustenance,

My mind's distempered, and my body's numbed.

And whether I have limbs or no, I know not.

O would my blood drop out from every vein,

As doth this water from my tattered robes !  
 Tell Isabel, the Queen, I looked not thus,  
 When for her sake I ran at tilt in France,  
 And there unhorsed the Duke of Cleremont.

*Light.* O speak no more, my lord ! this breaks my heart.  
 Lie on this bed, and rest yourself a while.

*Edw.* These looks of thine can harbor nought but death :  
 I see my tragedy written in thy brows.  
 Yet stay a while, forbear thy bloody hand,  
 And let me see the stroke before it comes,  
 That even then, when I shall lose my life,  
 My mind may be more steadfast on my God.

*Light.* What means your highness to mistrust me thus ?

*Edw.* What mean'st thou to dissemble with me thus ?

*Light.* These hands were never stained with innocent  
 blood,

Nor shall they now be tainted with a king's.

*Edw.* Forgive my thought, for having such a thought.

One jewel have I left, receive thou this.

Still fear I, and I know not what's the cause,

But every joint shakes as I give it thee.

Oh, if thou harbor'st murder in thy heart,

Let the gift change thy mind, and save thy soul.

Know that I am a King : Oh, at that name

I feel a hell of grief. Where is my crown ?

Gone, gone ; and do I still remain alive ?

*Light.* You're overwatched, my lord ; lie down and rest.

*Edw.* But that grief keeps me waken, I should sleep ;

For not these ten days have these eyelids closed.

Now as I speak they fall, and yet with fear

Open again. O wherefore sitt'st thou here ?

*Light.* If you mistrust me, I'll be gone, my lord.

*Edw.* No, no ; for if thou mean'st to murder me,

Thou wilt return again ; and therefore stay.

*Light.* He sleeps.

*Edw.* O let me not die ; yet stay, O stay a while.

*Light.* How now, my lord ?

*Edw.* Something still buzzeth in mine ears,

And tells me if I sleep, I never wake ;

This fear is that which makes me tremble thus.

And therefore tell me wherefore art thou come?

*Light.* To rid thee of thy life. Matrevis, come.

*Edw.* I am too weak and feeble to resist:

Assist me, sweet God, and receive my soul.

VI. "FAUSTUS." The most famous of all Marlowe's plays is *The Life and Death of Dr. Faustus*, based on the same plot that Goethe used years afterwards with such telling force. The character of Faust is much alike in both dramas. He sells his soul to Mephistopheles on condition that for twenty-four years the latter shall be his servant and do his will. During this period Faustus visits different countries and revels in luxury and splendor, but when the time expires evil spirits enter and carry him off amidst thunder and lightning. There are scenes and passages of terrific grandeur and most thrilling agony, but they are intermixed with low humor and supernatural machinery that is little less than ridiculous, so the play cannot be compared with the masterpiece of the great German poet. It is quite possible, however, that none of the comic scenes are actually from the pen of Marlowe. In the catastrophe, it may be said, the poet surpasses himself and shows the wonder of his genius.

The play is opened by the chorus in a descriptive prelude. Then follows the first scene:

FAUSTUS *discovered in his study*

*Faustus.* Settle thy studies, Faustus, and begin

To sound the depth of that thou wilt profess:

Having commenc'd, be a divine in show,  
 Yet level at the end of every art,  
 And live and die in Aristotle's works.  
 Sweet Analytics, 'tis thou hast ravish'd me!  
*Bene disserere est finis logices.*  
 Is, to dispute well, logic's chiefest end?  
 Affords this art no greater miracle?  
 Then read no more; thou hast attain'd that end:  
 A greater subject fitteth Faustus' wit:  
 Bid Economy farewell, and Galen come:  
 Be a physician, Faustus; heap up gold,  
 And be eterniz'd for some wondrous cure:  
*Summum bonum medicinae sanitas,*  
 The end of physic is our body's health.  
 Why, Faustus, hast thou not attain'd that end?  
 Are not thy bills hung up as monuments,  
 Whereby whole cities have escap'd the plague,  
 And thousand desperate maladies been cur'd?  
 Yet art thou still but Faustus, and a man.  
 Couldst thou make men to live eternally,  
 Or, being dead, raise them to life again,  
 Then this profession were to be esteem'd.  
 Physic, farewell! Where is Justinian?

[*Reads.*

*Enter* WAGNER

Wagner, commend me to my dearest friends,  
 The German Valdes and Cornelius;  
 Request them earnestly to visit me.

Wag. I will, sir.

[*Exit.*

Faust. Their conference will be a greater help to me  
 Than all my labors, plod I ne'er so fast.

*Enter* GOOD ANGEL and EVIL ANGEL

G. Ang. O, Faustus, lay that damned book aside,  
 And gaze not on it, lest it tempt thy soul,  
 And heap God's heavy wrath upon thy head!  
 Read, read the Scriptures:—that is blasphemy.

E. Ang. Go forward, Faustus, in that famous art  
 Wherein all Nature's treasure is contain'd:

Be thou on earth as Jove is in the sky,  
Lord and commander of these elements.

[*Exeunt* ANGELS.]

*Faust.* How am I glutted with conceit of this!  
Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please,  
Resolve me of all ambiguities,  
Perform what desperate enterprise I will?  
I'll have them fly to India for gold,  
Ransack the ocean for orient pearl,  
And search all corners of the new-found world  
For pleasant fruits and princely delicates;  
I'll have them read me strange philosophy,  
And tell the secrets of all foreign kings;  
I'll have them wall all Germany with brass,  
And make swift Rhine circle fair Wittenberg;  
I'll have them fill the public schools with silk,  
Wherewith the students shall be bravely clad;  
I'll levy soldiers with the coin they bring,  
And chase the Prince of Parma from our land,  
And reign sole king of all the provinces;  
Yea, stranger engines for the brunt of war,  
Than was the fiery keel at Antwerp-bridge,  
I'll make my servile spirits to invent.

Valdes and Cornelius help Faustus to conjure, and scholars wonder at the strange change in Faustus. Scene III begins:

*Faust.* Now that the gloomy shadow of the night,  
Longing to view Orion's drizzling look,  
Leaps from th' antaretic world unto the sky,  
And dims the welkin with her pitchy breath,  
Faustus, begin thine incantations,  
And try if devils will obey thy hest,  
Seeing thou hast pray'd and sacrific'd to them.  
Within this circle is Jehovah's name,  
Forward and backward anagrammatiz'd,  
Th' abbreviated names of holy saints,  
Figures of every adjunct to the heavens,

And characters of signs and erring stars,  
By which the spirits are enforc'd to rise:  
Then fear not, Faustus, to be resolute,  
And try the utmost magic can perform.

Faustus conjures Mephistopheles, who appears in a burst of thunder:

*Enter MEPHISTOPHELES*

I charge thee to return, and change thy shape;  
Thou art too ugly to attend on me:  
Go, and return an old Franciscan friar;  
That holy shape becomes a devil best.

*[Exit MEPHISTOPHELES.]*

I see there's virtue in my heavenly words.  
Who would not be proficient in this art?  
How pliant is this Mephistopheles,  
Full of obedience and humility!  
Such is the force of magic and my spells.

*Re-enter MEPHISTOPHELES like a Franciscan friar.*

*Meph.* Now, Faustus, what wouldst thou have me do?

*Faust.* I charge thee wait upon me whilst I live,  
To do whatever Faustus shall command,  
Be it to make the moon drop from her sphere,  
Or the ocean to overwhelm the world.

*Meph.* I am a servant to great Lucifer,  
And may not follow thee without his leave:  
No more than he commands must we perform.

*Faust.* Did not he charge thee to appear to me?

*Meph.* No, I came hither of mine own accord.

*Faust.* Did not my conjuring speeches raise thee.  
speak!

*Meph.* That was the cause, but yet *per accidens*;  
For, when we hear one rack the name of God,  
Abjure the Scriptures and his Savior Christ,  
We fly, in hope to get his glorious soul;  
Nor will we come, unless he use such means  
Whereby he is in danger to be damn'd.  
Therefore the shortest cut for conjuring

Is stoutly to abjure all godliness,  
And pray devoutly to the prince of hell.

*Faust.* So Faustus hath

Already done; and holds this principle,  
There is no chief but only Belzebub;  
To whom Faustus doth dedicate himself.  
This word "damnation" terrifies not me,  
For I confound hell in Elysium:  
My ghost be with the old philosophers!  
But, leaving these vain trifles of men's souls,  
Tell me what is that Lucifer thy Lord?

*Meph.* Arch-regent and commander of all spirits.

*Faust.* Was not that Lucifer an angel once?

*Meph.* Yes, Faustus, and most dearly lov'd of God.

*Faust.* How comes it, then, that he is prince of devils?

*Meph.* Oh, by aspiring pride and insolence;

For which God threw him from the face of heaven.

*Faust.* And what are you that live with Lucifer?

*Meph.* Unhappy spirits that fell with Lucifer,  
Conspired against our God with Lucifer,  
And are for ever damn'd with Lucifer.

*Faust.* Where are you damn'd?

*Meph.* In hell.

*Faust.* How comes it, then, that thou art out of hell?

*Meph.* Why, this is hell, nor am I out of it:

Think'st thou that I, that saw the face of God,  
And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,  
Am not tormented with ten thousand hells,  
In being depriv'd of everlasting bliss?  
O, Faustus, leave these frivolous demands,  
Which strike a terror to my fainting soul!

*Faust.* What, is great Mephistopheles so passionate  
For being deprived of the joys of heaven?  
Learn thou of Faustus manly fortitude,  
And scorn those joys thou never shalt possess.  
Go bear these tidings to great Lucifer:  
Seeing Faustus hath incurr'd eternal death  
By desperate thoughts against Jove's deity,  
Say, he surrenders up to him his soul,

So he will spare him four and twenty years,  
 Letting him live in all voluptuousness;  
 Having thee ever to attend on me,  
 To give me whatsoever I shall ask,  
 To tell me whatsoever I demand,  
 To slay mine enemies, and to aid my friends,  
 And always be obedient to my will.  
 Go, and return to mighty Lucifer,  
 And meet me in my study at midnight,  
 And then resolve me of thy master's mind.

*Meph.* I will, Faustus.

[*Exit.*

*Faust.* Had I as many souls as there be stars,  
 I'd give them all for Mephistopheles.  
 By him I'll be great emperor of the world,  
 And make a bridge thorough the moving air,  
 To pass the ocean with a band of men;  
 I'll join the hills that bind the Afric shore,  
 And make that country continent to Spain,  
 And both contributory to my crown:  
 The Emperor shall not live but by my leave,  
 Nor any potentate of Germany.  
 Now that I have obtain'd what I desir'd,  
 I'll live in speculation of this art,  
 Till Mephistopheles return again.

[*Exit.*

In a later scene with the same characters:

*Faust.* Now, Faustus,

Must thou needs be damn'd, canst thou not be sav'd.  
 What boots it, then, to think on God or heaven?  
 Away with such vain fancies, and despair;  
 Despair in God, and trust in Belzebub:  
 Now, go not backward, Faustus, be resolute:  
 Why waver'st thou? Oh, something soundeth in mine  
 ear,

“Abjure this magic, turn to God again!”

Why, he loves thee not;  
 The god thou serv'st is thine own appetite,  
 Wherein is fix'd the love of Belzebub:



To him I'll build an altar and a church,  
And offer lukewarm blood of new-born babes.

*Enter GOOD ANGEL and EVIL ANGEL*

*E. Ang.* Go forward, Faustus, in that famous art.

*G. Ang.* Sweet Faustus, leave that execrable art.

*Faust.* Contrition, prayer, repentance—what of these?

*G. Ang.* Oh, they are means to bring thee unto heaven.

*E. Ang.* Rather illusions, fruits of lunacy,  
That make men foolish that do use them most.

*G. Ang.* Sweet Faustus, think of heaven and heavenly things.

*E. Ang.* No, Faustus; think of honor and of wealth.

[*Exeunt ANGELS.*]

*Faust.* Wealth!

Why, the signiory of Embden shall be mine.

When Mephistopheles shall stand by me,

What power can hurt me? Faustus, thou art safe.

Cast no more doubts.—Mephistopheles, come,

And bring glad tidings from great Lucifer;—

Is't not midnight?—come, Mephistopheles,

*Veni, veni, Mephistophele!*

*Enter MEPHISTOPHELES*

Now tell me what saith Lucifer, thy lord?

*Meph.* That I shall wait on Faustus whilst he lives,

So he will buy my service with his soul.

*Faust.* Already Faustus hath hazarded that for thee.

*Meph.* But now thou must bequeath it solemnly,

And write a deed of gift with thine own blood;

For that security craves Lucifer.

If thou deny it, I must back to hell.

*Faust.* Stay, Mephistopheles, and tell me, what good will my soul do thy lord?

*Meph.* Enlarge his kingdom.

*Faust.* Is that the reason why he tempts us thus?

*Meph.* *Solamen miscris socios habuisse doloris.*

*Faust.* Why, have you any pain that torture others?

*Meph.* As great as have the human souls of men.

But, tell me, Faustus, shall I have thy soul?  
And I will be thy slave, and wait on thee,  
And give thee more than thou hast wit to ask.

*Faust.* Ay, Mephistopheles, I'll give it thee.

*Meph.* Then, Faustus, stab thine arm courageously,  
And bind thy soul, that at some certain day  
Great Lucifer may claim it as his own;  
And then be thou as great as Lucifer.

*Faust.* (*Stabbing his arm*) Lo, Mephistopheles, for love  
of thee,

Faustus hath cut his arm, and with his proper blood  
Assures his soul to be great Lucifer's,  
Chief lord and regent of perpetual night!  
View here this blood that trickles from mine arm,  
And let it be propitious for my wish.

*Meph.* But, Faustus,  
Write it in manner of a deed of gift.

*Faust.* (*Writing*) Ay, so I do. But, Mephistopheles,  
My blood congeals, and I can write no more.

*Meph.* I'll fetch thee fire to dissolve it straight. [*Exit.*]

*Faust.* What might the staying of my blood portend?

Is it unwilling I should write this bill?

Why streams it not, that I may write afresh?

*Faustus gives to thee his soul:* Oh, there it stay'd!

Why shouldst thou not? is not thy soul thine own?

Then write again, *Faustus gives to thee his soul.*

*Re-enter MEPHISTOPHELES with the chafer of fire.*

*Meph.* See, Faustus, here is fire; set it on.

*Faust.* So, now the blood begins to clear again;

Now will I make an end immediately. [*Writes.*]

*Meph.* What will not I do to obtain his soul? [*Aside.*]

*Faust.* *Consummatum est;* this bill is ended,

And Faustus hath bequeath'd his soul to Lucifer.

But what is this inscription on mine arm?

*Homo, fuge:* whither should I fly?

If unto God, he'll throw me down to hell.

My senses are deceiv'd; here's nothing writ:—

Oh, yes, I see it plain; even here is writ,

*Homo, fuge:* yet shall not Faustus fly.

*Meph.* I'll fetch him somewhat to delight his mind.

[*Aside, and then exit.*]

*Enter DEVILS, giving crowns and rich apparel to FAUSTUS. They dance, and then depart.*

*Re-enter MEPHISTOPHELES*

*Faust.* What means this show? speak, Mephistopheles.

*Meph.* Nothing, Faustus, but to delight thy mind,

And let thee see what magic can perform.

*Faust.* But may I raise such spirits when I please?

*Meph.* Ay, Faustus, and do greater things than these.

*Faust.* Then, Mephistopheles, receive this scroll,

A deed of gift of body and of soul:

But yet conditionally that thou perform

All covenants and articles between us both!

*Meph.* Faustus, I swear by hell and Lucifer

To effect all promises between us both!

*Faust.* Then hear me read it, Mephistopheles. [*Reads.*]

*On these conditions following. First, that Faustus may be a spirit in form and substance. Secondly, that Mephistopheles shall be his servant, and be by him commanded. Thirdly, that Mephistopheles shall do for him, and bring him whatsoever he desires. Fourthly, that he shall be in his chamber or house invisible. Lastly, that he shall appear to the said John Faustus, at all times, in what shape and form soever he please. I, John Faustus, of Wittenberg, Doctor, by these presents, do give both body and soul to Lucifer, Prince of the East, and his minister Mephistopheles; and furthermore grant unto them, that, four-and-twenty years being expired, and these articles above-written being inviolate, full power to fetch or carry the said John Faustus, body and soul, flesh and blood, into their habitation wheresoever. By me, John Faustus.*

*Meph.* Speak, Faustus, do you deliver this as your deed?

*Faust.* Ay, take it, and the devil give thee good of it!

*Meph.* So, now, Faustus, ask me what thou wilt.

*Faust.* First I will question with thee about hell.

Tell me, where is the place that men call hell?

*Meph.* Under the heavens.

*Faust.* Ay, so are all things else; but whereabouts?

*Meph.* Within the bowels of these elements,  
Where we are tortur'd and remain for ever:  
Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscrib'd  
In one self-place; but where we are is hell,  
And where hell is, there must we ever be:  
And, to be short, when all the world dissolves,  
And every creature shall be purified,  
All places shall be hell that are not heaven.

*Faust.* I think hell's a fable.

*Meph.* Ay, think so still, till experience change thy mind.

*Faust.* Why, dost thou think that Faustus shall be  
damn'd?

*Meph.* Ay, of necessity, for here's the scroll  
In which thou hast given thy soul to Lucifer.

*Faust.* Ay, and body too; and what of that?  
Think'st thou that Faustus is so fond to imagine  
That, after this life, there is any pain?  
No, these are trifles and mere old wives' tales.

*Meph.* But I am an instance to prove the contrary,  
For I tell thee I am damn'd and now in hell.

. . . . .

Here, take this book, peruse it well:  
The iterating of these lines brings gold;  
The framing of this circle on the ground  
Brings thunder, whirlwinds, storm, and lightning;  
Pronounce this thrice devoutly to thyself,  
And men in harness shall appear to thee,  
Ready to execute what thou command'st.

*Faust.* Thanks, Mephistopheles, for this sweet book:  
This will I keep as chary as my life. [*Exeunt.*]

Faustus engages in many adventures with Mephistopheles: he makes a chariot journey through the heavens; rides on the back of a dragon to Rome and plays pranks on the Pope

and his cardinals; and finally, he calls up the spirit of Helen, "whose admired worth made Greece with ten years' war afflict poor Troy." Then the time draws near when Faustus must pay his debt:

*Thunder. Enter* LUCIFER, BELZEBUB *and* MEPHISTOPHELES

*Luc.* Thus from infernal Dis do we ascend  
To view the subjects of our monarchy,  
Those souls which sin seals the black sons of hell;  
'Mong which, as chief, Faustus, we come to thee,  
Bringing with us lasting damnation  
To wait upon thy soul: the time is come  
Which makes it forfeit.

*Meph.* And, this gloomy night,  
Here, in this room, will wretched Faustus be.

*Belz.* And here we'll stay,  
To mark him how he doth demean himself.

*Meph.* How should he but in desperate lunacy?  
Fond worldling, now his heart-blood dries with grief;  
His conscience kills it; and his laboring brain  
Begets a world of idle fantasies  
To over-reach the devil; but all in vain;  
His store of pleasures must be sauc'd with pain.  
He and his servant Wagner are at hand;  
Both come from drawing Faustus' latest will.  
See, where they come!

*Enter* FAUSTUS *and* WAGNER

*Faust.* Say, Wagner,—thou hast perus'd my will,  
How dost thou like it?

*Wag.* Sir, so wondrous well,  
As in all humble duty I do yield  
My life and lasting service for your love.

*Faust.* Gramercy, Wagner.

*Enter* SCHOLARS

Welcome, gentlemen.

[*Exit* WAGNER.]

*First Schol.* Now, worthy Faustus, methinks your looks  
are chang'd.

*Faust.* O gentlemen!

*Sec. Schol.* What ails Faustus?

*Faust.* Ah, my sweet chamber-fellow, had I lived with  
thee, then had I lived still! but now must die eternally.  
Look, sirs, comes he not? comes he not?

*First Schol.* O my dear Faustus, what imports this  
fear?

*Sec. Schol.* Is all our pleasure turn'd to melancholy?

*Third Schol.* He is not well with being over-solitary.

*Sec. Schol.* If it be so, we'll have physicians,

And Faustus shall be cur'd.

*Third Schol.* 'Tis but a surfeit, sir; fear nothing.

*Faust.* A surfeit of deadly sin, that hath damned both  
body and soul.

*Sec. Schol.* Yet, Faustus, look up to heaven, and re-  
member mercy is infinite.

*Faust.* But Faustus' offense can ne'er be pardoned: the  
serpent that tempted Eve may be saved, but not  
Faustus. O gentlemen, hear me with patience, and  
tremble not at my speeches! Though my heart pant  
and quiver to remember that I have been a student  
here these thirty years, oh, would I had never seen  
Wittenberg, never read book! and what wonders I  
have done, all Germany can witness, yea, all the  
world; for which Faustus hath lost both Germany  
and the world, yea, heaven itself, heaven, the seat of  
God, the throne of the blessed, the kingdom of joy;  
and must remain in hell for ever, hell, O hell, for ever!  
Sweet friends, what shall become of Faustus, being  
in hell for ever?

*Sec. Schol.* Yet, Faustus, call on God.

*Faust.* On God, whom Faustus hath abjured! on God,  
whom Faustus hath blasphemed! O my God, I would  
weep! but the devil draws in my tears. Gush forth  
blood, instead of tears! yea, life and soul! Oh, he stays  
my tongue! I would lift up my hands; but see, they  
hold 'em, they hold 'em!

*All.* Who, Faustus?

*Faust.* Why, Lucifer and Mephistopheles. O gentlemen, I gave them my soul for my cunning!

*All.* Oh, God forbid!

*Faust.* God forbade it, indeed; but Faustus hath done it: for the vain pleasure of four-and-twenty years hath Faustus lost eternal joy and felicity. I writ them a bill with mine own blood: the date is expired; this is the time, and he will fetch me.

*First Schol.* Why did not Faustus tell us of this before, that divines might have prayed for thee?

*Faust.* Oft have I thought to have done so; but the devil threatened to tear me in pieces, if I named God, to fetch me body and soul, if I once gave ear to divinity: and now 'tis too late. Gentlemen, away, lest you perish with me.

*Sec. Schol.* Oh, what may we do to save Faustus?

*Faust.* Talk not of me, but save yourselves, and depart.

*Third Schol.* God will strengthen me; I will stay with Faustus.

*First Schol.* Tempt not God, sweet friend; but let us into the next room, and pray for him.

*Faust.* Ay, pray for me, pray for me; and what noise soever you hear, come not unto me, for nothing can rescue me.

*Sec. Schol.* Pray thou, and we will pray that God may have mercy upon thee.

*Faust.* Gentlemen, farewell: if I live till morning, I'll visit you; if not, Faustus is gone to hell.

*All.* Faustus, farewell. [*Exeunt* SCHOLARS.]

*Meph.* Ay, Faustus, now thou hast no hope of heaven; Therefore despair; think only upon hell,  
For that must be thy mansion, there to dwell.

*Faust.* Oh, thou bewitching fiend, 'twas thy temptation Hath robb'd me of eternal happiness!

*Meph.* I do confess it, Faustus, and rejoice:

'Twas I that, when thou wert i' the way to heaven,  
Damn'd up thy passage; when thou took'st the book  
To view the Scriptures, then I turn'd the leaves,

And led thine eye.

What, weep'st thou? 'tis too late; despair! Farewell:  
Fools that will laugh on earth must weep in hell.

[*Exit.*

*Enter GOOD ANGEL and EVIL ANGEL at several doors.*

*G. Ang.* O Faustus, if thou hadst given ear to me,  
Innumerable joys had follow'd thee!  
But thou didst love the world.

*E. Ang.* Gave ear to me,  
And now must taste hell-pains perpetually.

*G. Ang.* Oh, what will all thy riches, pleasures, pomps,  
Avail thee now?

*E. Ang.* Nothing, but vex thee more,  
To want in hell, that had on earth such store.

*G. Ang.* Oh, thou hast lost celestial happiness,  
Pleasures unspeakable, bliss without end.  
Hadst thou affected sweet divinity,  
Hell or the devil had had no power on thee:  
Hadst thou kept on that way, Faustus, behold,

[*Music, while a throne descends.*

In what resplendent glory thou hadst sit  
In yonder throne, like those bright-shining saints,  
And triumph'd over hell! That hast thou lost;  
And now, poor soul, must thy good angel leave thee:  
The jaws of hell are open to receive thee.

[*Exit. The throne ascends.*

*E. Ang.* Now, Faustus, let thine eyes with horror stare  
[*Hell is discovered.*

Into that vast perpetual torture-house:  
There are the Furies tossing damned souls  
On burning forks; there bodies boil in lead;  
There are live quarters broiling on the coals,  
That ne'er can die; this ever-burning chair  
Is for o'er-tortur'd souls to rest them in;  
These that are fed with sops of flaming fire,  
Were gluttons, and lov'd only delicates,  
And laugh'd to see the poor starve at their gates:  
But yet all these are nothing; thou shalt see  
Ten thousand tortures that more horrid be.



*Faust.* Oh, I have seen enough to torture me!

*E. Ang.* Nay, thou must feel them, taste the smart of all:

He that loves pleasure must for pleasure fall:

And so I leave thee, Faustus, till anon;

Then wilt thou tumble in confusion.

[*Exit. Hell disappears.—The clock strikes eleven.*]

*Faust.* O Faustus!

Now hast thou but one bare hour to live,

And then thou must be damn'd perpetually!

Stand still, you ever-moving spheres of heaven,

That time may cease, and midnight never come;

Fair Nature's eye, rise, rise again, and make

Perpetual day; or let this hour be but

A year, a month, a week, a natural day,

That Faustus may repent and save his soul!

*O lente, lente currite, noctis equi!*

The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike,

The devil will come, and Faustus must be damn'd.

Oh, I'll leap up to heaven!—Who pulls me down?

See, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!

One drop of blood will save me; O my Christ!—

Rebuke not my heart for naming of my Christ;

Yet will I call on him: Oh, spare me, Lucifer!—

Where is it now? 'tis gone:

And see, a threatening arm, an angry brow!

Mountains and hills, come, come, and fall on me,

And hide me from the heavy wrath of heaven!

No!

Then will I headlong run into the earth:

Gape, earth! Oh, no, it will not harbor me!

You stars that reign'd at my nativity,

Whose influence hath allotted death and hell,

Now draw up Faustus, like a foggy mist,

Into the entrails of yon laboring cloud,

That, when you vomit forth into the air,

My limbs may issue from your smoky mouths;

But let my soul mount and ascend to heaven!

[*The clock strikes the half-hour.*]

Oh, half the hour is past! 'twill all be past anon.

Oh, if my soul must suffer for my sin,

Impose some end to my incessant pain;

Let Faustus live in hell a thousand years,

A hundred thousand, and at last be sav'd!

No end is limited to damned souls.

Why wert thou not a creature wanting soul?

Or why is this immortal that thou hast?

Oh, Pythagoras' metempsychosis, were that true,

This soul should fly from me, and I be chang'd

Into some brutish beast! all beasts are happy,

For, when they die,

Their souls are soon dissolv'd in elements;

But mine must live, still to be plagu'd in hell.

Curs'd be the parents that engender'd me!

No, Faustus, curse thyself, curse Lucifer

That hath depriv'd thee of the joys of heaven.

*[The clock strikes twelve.]*

It strikes, it strikes! Now, body, turn to air,

Or Lucifer will bear thee quick to hell!

O soul, be chang'd into small water-drops,

And fall into the ocean, ne'er be found!

*Thunder. Enter DEVILS.*

Oh, mercy, heaven! look not so fierce on me!

Adders and serpents, let me breathe a while!

Ugly hell, gape not! come not, Lucifer!

I'll burn my books!—O Mephistopheles!

*[Exeunt DEVILS with FAUSTUS.]*

*Enter SCHOLARS*

*First Schol.* Come, gentlemen, let us go visit Faustus,

For such a dreadful night was never seen;

Since first the world's creation did begin,

Such fearful shrieks and cries were never heard:

Pray heaven the doctor have escap'd the danger.

*Sec. Schol.* Oh, help us, heaven! see, here are Faustus' limbs,

All torn asunder by the hand of death!

*Third Schol.* The devil whom Faustus serv'd have torn  
him thus;

For, twixt the hours of twelve and one, methought  
I heard him shriek and call aloud for help;  
At which self time the house seem'd all on fire  
With dreadful horror of these damned fiends.

*Sec. Schol.* Well, gentlemen, though Faustus' end be  
such

As every Christian heart laments to think on,  
Yet, for he was a scholar once admir'd  
For wondrous knowledge in our German schools,  
We'll give his mangled limbs due burial;  
And all the students, cloth'd in mourning black,  
Shall wait upon his heavy funeral. [Exeunt.

*Enter CHORUS*

*Chor.* Cut is the branch that might have grown full  
straight,

And burned is Apollo's laurel-bough,  
That sometime grew within this learned man.  
Faustus is gone: regard his hellish fall,  
Whose fiendful fortune may exhort the wise  
Only to wonder at unlawful things,  
Whose deepness doth entice such forward wits  
To practice more than heavenly power permits.

[Exeunt.

*Terminat hora diem; terminat auctor opus.*



ARCHES OF SAINT JOHN'S PRIORY, CHESTER



## CHAPTER X

THE ELIZABETHAN AGE (CONTINUED)

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

**I**NTRODUCTORY. Any account of English literature that does not give large space to Shakespeare is defective, and yet in no ordinary compass can anything like justice be done to the man and his works. There have been five great poets, each supreme in the language of a different race and in a different age, but all read with delight by every cultured person in every nation since they wrote. More than seven hundred years before Christ, Homer spoke for the Greeks; a few years before the beginning of the Christian era, Vergil wrote in Latin; about thirteen hundred years later, Dante gave eternal power to Italian poetry; in three hundred years, Shakespeare followed in English, and rose above them all; two centuries later, Goethe ap-

peared as the greatest writer of Germany. It took twenty-five centuries to produce the five masters, and it is not probable that their equal will be found except in the genius of another nation and in another tongue, for each in his way exhausted the possibilities of his language and created masterpieces that are nearly perfect.

Whole libraries have been written about Shakespeare, and the tributes to his genius are as numerous as the authors who have written. In almost every respect as a poet, Shakespeare stands above criticism, for he has made most of the principles upon which criticism is based. Walter Savage Landor says, "A rib of Shakespeare would have made a Milton; the same portion of Milton, all poets born ever since." Milton says:

What needs my Shakespeare, for his honored bones,  
The labor of an age in piled stones?  
Or that his hallowed reliques should be hid  
Under a starry-pointing pyramid?  
Dear son of Memory! great heir of Fame!  
What needst thou such weak witness of thy name?  
Thou, in our wonder and astonishment,  
Has built thyself a live-long monument.

In an interview, Robert G. Ingersoll once remarked, "Shakespeare used up the language. The English language is not great enough to have cut from it the garments of glory for more than one man like Shakespeare."

II. HIS LIFE. "That he lived, and that he died, and that he was a little lower than the

angels'' is De Quincey's summing up of Shakespeare's life; and after all, these words tell as much as we really need to know about the biography of this greatest of all dramatists, for in reading Shakespeare it is not necessary to know anything about the man's life in order to interpret his writings, and his writings show him to have been so many-sided that it is next to impossible to erect from them a human character. Moreover, the plays are so universal, the study of human passions in their weakness and in their strength so extensive and widely applicable, that we read them for their own sake. Hamlet is Hamlet, and as real to-day as any man whose history can be read. In the same way, Lear is Lear, Portia is Portia, but no one of them is ever Shakespeare. His personality never enters into the characters that adorn his pages.

In a way this is fortunate, for the known facts of Shakespeare's life are not numerous, but they are quite sufficient, even if inadequate to those who wish to gratify a personal curiosity. It seems an impossibility that one man could have had so comprehensive a mind and have used it so vigorously in so many directions. His life has been the subject of continuous speculation among writers almost since the time of his death, and the inferences drawn from the study of his works are interesting and illuminating. However, it is unnecessary for us to consider them at length here.

Briefly, the facts known of his life are these: He was born at Stratford-on-Avon in 1564, where his father, by energy and perseverance, had reached a position of considerable prominence in his native town, although a little later he lost his fortune. William, the third son, probably attended the grammar school of Stratford, but what he did prior to his nineteenth year we do not know. However, then he married Anne Hathaway, daughter of a yeoman of Shottery, near Stratford. From the marriage bond, dated November 28, 1582, we find Shakespeare was in his nineteenth year, while from the date on her tombstone it is known that his wife was eight years older. On May 26 following their marriage the first child, named Susanna, was baptized, and in 1585 a son and daughter were born, who received the names of Hamnet and Judith.

The next we hear of Shakespeare he was established in London as a player and dramatist, but thereafter is a gap of seven years, during which we are left to traditions and conjecture. Why he left Stratford is not known, but it has been surmised, with some show of truth, that his marriage was unhappy, and that he went to escape from living with his wife. On the other hand, there is the famous tale of his having been caught and prosecuted for deer stealing, and therefore he thought it was good judgment to leave Stratford. This tale is undoubtedly false, but still persists. By 1592 he was sufficiently noted to call for sharp jibes from

the inordinately jealous Robert Greene, as we have seen in our account of that man's life, but it was not until 1593 that he published *Venus and Adonis*, which he dedicated as "the first heir of my invention." A year later he dedicated to the same patron his poem *The Rape of Lucrece*.

About this time Shakespeare began to improve in his worldly condition and to save some money, as we know from his purchase of certain lands, of which the deeds are still in existence. About the same time, his father, John Shakespeare, also appears in better circumstances, and it is not at all out of reason to suppose that Shakespeare assisted his father materially. In 1596 William's only son, Hamnet, died and was buried at Stratford, where the family continued to reside. Tradition says that during the time William lived in London he visited his home at least once a year, and in 1597 purchased at Stratford a substantial house called New Place.

A publication printed in 1598 enumerates twelve of Shakespeare's plays, but he was still an actor, for in that year he took part in the production of Jonson's comedy, *Everyman in His Humor*. A year later Shakespeare was a shareholder in the Globe Theater. He bought 107 acres of arable land in the parish of Old Stratford for £320, and acquired still further properties three years later, so that he had finally secured from his neighbors the title of William Shakespeare, Gentleman, of Strat-



ford-on-Avon. But in London, as late as 1603, he was still a player, with a place in the list of the actors who produced Ben Jonson's *Sejanus*. Several deaths occurred in his family within a few years, and in 1616, after his daughter Judith married, he executed his will, and a month later was dead. There are many traditions concerning the manner of his death, but we know positively what was included within his will. One remarkable legacy was leaving to his wife the "second best bed with furniture."

Shakespeare was buried in the church at Stratford, on the north wall of which is a bust and an epitaph; and on the slab over his grave in the floor are the famous words, which he is said to have written himself:

Good frend, for Jesus sake forbear  
To digg the dust enclosed heare;  
Blest be the man that spares thes stones  
And curst be he that moves my bones.

All the evidence so far obtained goes to prove the gentleness and excellence of Shakespeare's character as appreciated by his contemporaries. Aubrey tells us that his person was handsome and well shaped, that he was good company, and "of a very ready and pleasant and smooth wit," and it is pleasant to remember that after his days of activity in the city he was content to end his life in quiet retirement on his estate in the little town in which he was born.

III. THE BACON-SHAKESPEARE CONTROVERSY. The difficulty of believing that a man of whom we know so little and that little of so comparatively commonplace a character, could write the marvelous dramas which bear his name, has given rise to a world of criticism and speculation. Not a few have felt that the plays must have been written by a man more conversant with public life, a man whose intellect showed itself superior to all others in his age, and such a character appeared to be found in the person of Lord Bacon. However, there are most excellent arguments against the belief, and the great burden of authority is in favor of the genuineness of the dramas as the production of William Shakespeare. No record has ever been found that Bacon and Shakespeare were intimately acquainted, but still critics have maintained that Shakespeare received many suggestions from Lord Bacon.

In order to establish the authorship by Bacon it would be necessary to prove first that Shakespeare did not write the plays, and secondly, that Bacon did. Then, everything indicates that Bacon was a man of great pride and ambition, and that it is not at all probable that he would not want the credit for having written such successful dramas. The answer to this argument has been that Bacon, owing to his political position, feared to make known his authorship at the time when players were in disrepute and there was danger of serious punishment for those who were too noticeably

promoting the dramatic art. But we do not need to enter into this discussion; we may the more safely ignore the controversy for the reason that Shakespeare's personality figures so little in his dramas. It seems utterly impossible to the critical reader that the man who wrote Bacon's essays could possess the imagination and art to write Shakespeare's plays. Nothing is gained by speculation, and so far as we are concerned, most that has been published concerning Bacon's authorship appears puerile, uninteresting and unconvincing.

IV. SHAKESPEARE'S GENIUS. Shakespeare's powers of observation must have been marvelous, and his intellect exceedingly keen. No one has accomplished more for the culture of the human race than has the old poet of Stratford. One might say almost that Shakespeare's genius is as many-sided as the characters he has created, but even then only part of the tale has been told. While he possessed the art of most skillfully painting human portraits and characters, his manikins talk and act in such a manner that they seem human beings, and one is always finding in unexpected quarters new evidences of his extraordinary talent.

We cannot consider every phase of his genius, but it will be interesting to make a somewhat exhaustive investigation of one and leave the others to the reader. For instance, in Shakespeare's plays about ninety deaths take place, either on the stage or immediately behind the scenes, so that the description of the

events is given almost immediately. Twenty-five are of this latter character. Of the modes of death, the dagger or the sword account for about sixty; twelve die from old age or natural decay; seven are beheaded; five die by poison; two, perhaps three, by suffocation; two by strangling; one from a fall; one by drowning; three of snakebite; and one is beaten to death by a sand-bag. In every case Shakespeare has been able to describe the characteristic actions, pains and agonies that would accompany the death, with a skill which only an expert surgeon or one having witnessed many deaths would dare to emulate. Especially are the deaths by steel very closely studied from nature. Gloucester's death by strangling tells the tale of a terrible struggle:

His face is black and full of blood,  
His eyeballs further out than he lived,  
His hair upreared, his nostrils stretched with struggling,  
His hands abroad displayed.

The flowers that are mentioned by Shakespeare show that he knew them well; he was as familiar with trees; in fact, in every department of natural history as it then was understood he showed great knowledge, and his mistakes are as few as one could possibly expect. But all of these things pale before his profound knowledge of human character; his power in making his men and women startlingly real has never been equaled. They are all flesh-and-blood, these characters of his, but

rarely are they dull and commonplace. Not too plainly does he expose their thoughts, feelings and foibles, but subtly views the workings of their minds. He is as remarkable in depicting the lighter sentiments, the play of affections and the gentler feelings as he is dexterous and powerful in delineating the terrible passions of murderous hate and ruthless ambition. The awful significance of human acts and their effects upon the development of character stagger the readers of his tragedies.

But what shall we say of his matchless heroes and heroines, the noble men and women who appear in so many of the dramas—Orlando, Horatio, Antonio, Portia, Hermione, Desdemona and many another? Their goodness is as natural and as simple as that of the most refined person of to-day. "The good they do in doing it pays itself; if they do you a kindness, they are not at all solicitous to have you know and remember it; sufferings and hardships overtake them, if wounds and bruises be their portion, they never grumble or repine at it," says Hudson. No other writer ever seemed to enter so into the soul of a woman, or to depict her in such vivid colors. Strong, tender, sweet, yet full of fresh, healthy sentiment are the best of his characters, who, however, show no signs of weakness or sentimentality, nor do they lack wit and brains.

Shakespeare was the spokesman of the human soul, and as such there is no time in life in which we may not turn to him with profit,

no mood for which he does not have an antidote, no sorrow for which we may not find some sympathetic lines. What is life? Let the poet answer:

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,  
And then is heard no more: it is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing.

Or again:

We are such stuff  
As dreams are made of, and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep.

Do we want a rule of life? Find it in *All's Well That Ends Well*:

Love all, trust a few, do wrong to none.

A faultless writer can never be, for human nature is always fallible. Perhaps Shakespeare approached perfection as nearly as any one ever can, and any praise, however extravagant, bestowed upon him may appear perfectly justifiable to the reader enthralled by his glowing scenes. Nevertheless, he who retains a critical spirit is bound to find imperfections, and not a few that are grave. While his judgment excelled that of his contemporaries, yet he partook of their errors. Some of his plays have hastily constructed plots that are weak and illogical, and whole scenes appear that interfere with the unity of the action. The introduction of humor in tragic scenes is oftentimes an annoyance, and Shakespeare's habit

of punning often leads him to ridiculous extremes. At times, too, his style is stiff and turgid, and lacks perspicuity. Often the reader is shocked by unnecessary indecencies, but even in this respect Shakespeare's delicacy was much in excess of that of his contemporaries, and we like to think that if he had had the opportunity to revise the dramas many things would have been changed. Apropos of his faults, Ben Jonson writes in fairness:

I remember, the players have often mentioned it as an honor to Shakespeare, that in his writing—whatsoever he penned—he never blotted out a line. My answer hath been, would he had blotted out a thousand! which they thought a malevolent speech. I had not told posterity this, but for their ignorance who chose that circumstance to commend their friend by wherein he most faulted, and to justify mine own candor; for I loved the man, and do honor his memory on this side idolatry as much as any. He was indeed honest, and of an open and free nature; had an excellent phantasy, brave notions, and gentle expressions, wherein he flowed with that facility, that sometimes it was necessary he should be stopped, *sufflimandus erat*, as Augustus said of Haterius. His wit was in his own power; would the rule of it had been so too! Many times he fell into those things could not escape laughter, as when he said, in the person of Caesar, one speaking to him: "Caesar, thou dost me wrong," he replied: "Caesar did never wrong but with just cause," and such like, which were ridiculous.

In conclusion, let us quote two passages from William Hazlitt's essay *On Shakespeare and Milton*. The first is a comparison of the greatest four English poets, Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare and Milton:

In comparing these four writers together, it might be said that Chaucer excels as the poet of manners, or of real life; Spenser, as the poet of romance; Shakespeare as the poet of nature (in the largest use of the term); and Milton, as the poet of morality. Chaucer most frequently describes things as they are; Spenser, as we wish them to be; Shakespeare, as they would be; and Milton as they ought to be. As poets, and as great poets, imagination, that is, the power of feigning things according to nature, was common to them all: but the principle or moving power, to which this faculty was most subservient in Chaucer, was habit, or inveterate prejudice; in Spenser, novelty, and the love of the marvelous; in Shakespeare, it was the force of passion, combined with every variety of possible circumstances; and in Milton, only with the highest. The characteristic of Chaucer is intensity; of Spenser, remoteness; of Milton, elevation; of Shakespeare, everything.

The second extract is a consideration of Shakespeare's mind:

The striking peculiarity of Shakespeare's mind was its generic quality, its power of communication with all other minds—so that it contained a universe of thought and feeling within itself, and had no one peculiar bias, or exclusive excellence more than another. He was just like any other man, but that he was like all other men. He was the least of an egotist that it was possible to be. He was nothing in himself; but he was all that others were, or that they could become. He not only had in himself the germs of every faculty and feeling, but he could follow them by anticipation, intuitively, into all their conceivable ramifications, through every change of fortune or conflict of passion, or turn of thought. He had “a mind reflecting ages past,” and present:—all the people that ever lived are there. There was no respect of persons with him. His genius shone equally on the evil and on the good, on the wise and the foolish,



of punning often leads him to ridiculous extremes. At times, too, his style is stiff and turgid, and lacks perspicuity. Often the reader is shocked by unnecessary indecencies, but even in this respect Shakespeare's delicacy was much in excess of that of his contemporaries, and we like to think that if he had had the opportunity to revise the dramas many things would have been changed. Apropos of his faults, Ben Jonson writes in fairness:

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the monarch and the beggar: "All corners of the earth, kings, queens, and states, maids, matrons, nay, the secrets of the grave," are hardly hid from his searching glance. He was like the genius of humanity, changing places with all of us at pleasure, and playing with our purposes as with his own. He turned the globe round for his amusement, and surveyed the generations of men, and the individuals as they passed, with their different concerns, passions, follies, vices, virtues, actions, and motives—as well those that they knew, as those which they did not know, or acknowledge to themselves. The dreams of childhood, the ravings of despair, were the toys of his fancy. Airy beings waited at his call, and came at his bidding. Harmless fairies "nodded to him, and did him curtesies": and the night-hag bestrode the blast at the command of "his so potent art." The world of spirits lay open to him, like the world of real men and women: and there is the same truth in his delineations of the one as of the other; for if the preternatural characters he describes could be supposed to exist, they would speak, and feel, and act, as he makes them. He had only to think of anything in order to become that thing, with all the circumstances belonging to it. When he conceived of a character, whether real or imaginary, he not only entered into all its thoughts and feelings, but seemed instantly, and as if by touching a secret spring, to be surrounded with all the same objects, "subject to the same skyey influences," the same local, outward, and unforeseen accidents which would occur in reality.

V. SHAKESPEARE'S HUMOR. We are so inclined to admire the delicacy and beauty of Shakespeare's sentiment or are so moved by the vehemence of his passion and the tragic intensity of his emotions that at intervals we forget entirely that he was one of the greatest humorists in English literature. In fact, he

created characters equal in wit and drollery to any on record, and there are whole scenes as amusing as anything that can be found. His humor, however, is fanciful and humane, not usually satirical, and rarely, if ever, bitter or sardonic. More frequently we sympathize with the very characters at which we laugh, and in his most humorous passages we find little that leaves unpleasantness behind it or seems to contain the sting of ill-nature. Falstaff alone is enough to make his author famous; Mercutio's gayety, frankness and volubility are a constant delight; Touchstone is a mischievous wag with a shrewd wit.

While there are boisterous scenes and incidents full of ribald mirth, yet there are charmingly witty scenes, such as those of Olivia with Hero and of Benedict with Beatrice, which are the refinement of humor. Shakespeare's fools are usually born fools; their absurd actions and quaint speeches entertain the reader, but do not destroy his sympathy. A long and entertaining article could be written upon their peculiarities.

In one of his essays, Hazlitt thus comments upon one of the humorous scenes:

Shakespeare takes up the meanest subjects with the same tenderness that we do an insect's wing, and would not kill a fly. To give a more particular instance of what I mean, I will take the inimitable and affecting, though most absurd and ludicrous dialogue, between Shallow and Silence, on the death of old Double: *Shallow*. Come on, come on, come on; give me your

hand, Sir; give me your hand, Sir; an early stirrer, by the rood. And how doth my good cousin Silence?

*Silence.* Good morrow, good cousin Shallow.

*Shallow.* And how doth my cousin, your bedfellow? and your fairest daughter, and mine, my god-daughter Ellen?

*Silence.* Alas, a black ouzel, cousin Shallow.

*Shallow.* By yea and nay, Sir; I dare say, my cousin William is become a good scholar; he is at Oxford still, is he not?

*Silence.* Indeed, Sir, to my cost.

*Shallow.* He must then to the Inns of Court shortly. I was once of Clement's Inn; where, I think, they will talk of mad Shallow yet.

*Silence.* You were called lusty Shallow then, cousin.

*Shallow.* I was called any thing, and I would have done any thing indeed, and roundly too. There was I, and little John Doit of Staffordshire, and black George Bare, and Francis Pickbone, and Will Squele a Cots-wold man, you had not four such swinge-bucklers in all the Inns of Court again; and, I may say to you, we knew where the bona-robas were, and had the best of them all at commandment. Then was Jack Falstaff (now Sir John), a boy, and page to Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk.

*Silence.* This Sir John, cousin, that comes hither anon about soldiers?

*Shallow.* The same Sir John, the very same: I saw him break Schoggan's head at the court-gate, when he was a crack, not thus high; and the very same day did I fight with one Sampson Stockfish, a fruiterer, behind Gray's Inn. Oh, the mad days that I have spent! and to see how many of mine old acquaintance are dead!

*Silence.* We shall all follow, cousin.

*Shallow.* Certain, 'tis certain, very sure, very sure: death (as the Psalmist saith) is certain to all, all shall die.—How a good yoke of bullocks at Stamford fair?

*Silence.* Truly, cousin, I was not there.

*Shallow.* Death is certain. Is old Double of your town living yet?

*Silence.* Dead, Sir.

*Shallow.* Dead! see, see! he drew a good bow: and dead? he shot a fine shoot. John of Gaunt loved him well, and betted much money on his head. Dead! he would have clapped i'th' clout at twelve score; and carried you a forehand shaft a fourteen and fourteen and a half, that it would have done a man's heart good to see.—How a score of ewes now?

*Silence.* Thereafter as they be: a score of good ewes may be worth ten pounds.

*Shallow.* And is old Double dead?

There is not any thing more characteristic than this in all Shakespeare. A finer sermon on mortality was never preached. We see the frail condition of human life, and the weakness of the human understanding in Shallow's reflections on it; who, while the past is sliding from beneath his feet, still clings to the present. The meanest circumstances are shown through an atmosphere of abstraction that dignifies them: their very insignificance makes them more affecting, for they instantly put a check on our aspiring thoughts, and remind us that, seen through that dim perspective, the difference between the great and little, the wise and foolish, is not much. "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin," and old Double, though his exploits had been greater, could but have had his day. There is a pathetic *naïveté* mixed up with Shallow's commonplace reflections and impertinent digressions. The reader laughs (as well he may) in reading the passage, but he lays down the book to think. The wit, however diverting, is social and humane. But this is not the distinguishing characteristic of wit, which is generally provoked by folly, and spends its venom upon vice.

VI. HIS WORKS. Of his non-dramatic works, *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*

are long poems of considerable interest to critics, but they are not generally read at present. A collection of poems attributed to him under the title *The Passionate Pilgrim* are not now believed to be his work, but he wrote a series of beautiful sonnets and established the form in English for many years. It is as a dramatist, however, that every one knows him best, and in these matchless compositions his genius appears overpowering. Comprising comedy, tragedy and history, his dramas run the gamut of human interests and emotions, and appeal in one way or another to every intelligent reader. We laugh with Falstaff, weep with Juliet, shudder with Lady Macbeth or sympathize with Hamlet, for Shakespeare touches in turn every human emotion. Oliver Wendell Holmes has written: "I think most readers of Shakespeare sometimes find themselves thrown into exalted conditions, like that produced by music. They may drop the book to pass at once into the region of thought without words."

There are thirty-seven dramas which are usually attributed to him, and of these it is generally conceded that only a few of them show marks of collaboration. Considered chronologically, or as nearly so as we are able to place them, the plays naturally fall into four groups:

1. During the first period (1588-1593) the inexperienced dramatist shows himself as an experimenter in characterization, loose in the

construction of his plots and with his dialogue somewhat artificial. To this stage belong:

<i>Titus Andronicus</i>	<i>A Midsummer Night's</i>
Part I of <i>Henry VI</i>	<i>Dream</i>
<i>Love's Labor's Lost</i>	Parts II and III of <i>Henry</i>
<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	<i>VI</i>
<i>The Two Gentlemen of</i>	<i>King Richard III</i>
<i>Verona</i>	

2. The second period (1594–1601) exhibits the poet as more secure in his art, interested in the brilliant pageant of English history, brightly in touch with the comedy of life, and showing a deeper appreciation of power in at least one great tragedy. To this stage belong:

<i>King Richard II</i>	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>
Parts I and II of <i>Henry IV</i>	<i>Merry Wives of Windsor</i>
<i>King Henry V</i>	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>
<i>King John</i>	<i>As You Like It</i>
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	<i>Twelfth Night</i>
<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	

3. In the third period (1602–1608) the dramatist has mastered the resources of his art, has a fuller knowledge of life and produces comedies unmarked by bitterness and tragedies black with the deepest passions of human experience. In this category are included:

<i>All's Well That Ends Well</i>	<i>King Lear</i>
<i>Measure for Measure</i>	<i>Macbeth</i>
<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>
<i>Julius Caesar</i>	<i>Coriolanus</i>
<i>Hamlet</i>	<i>Timon of Athens</i>
<i>Othello</i>	

4. Finally, in the fourth period (1609–1613) Shakespeare's life appears to have been dark-



ened by his own personal experiences, yet, nevertheless, to have gained a certain serenity which enabled him to write more romantic plays, such as:

*Pericles*

*The Tempest*

*Cymbeline*

*King Henry VIII*

*The Winter's Tale*

Plays showing so comprehensive a view of human existence may be classified in various ways, and one, perhaps, that is convenient, is based upon the type of the drama:

1. *English History*. There are ten plays that relate to the history of England and really give to the student a more vivid picture of the several epochs than could be obtained any other way. Arranged in chronological order, they are:

*King John*

Part I of *Henry VI*

*Richard II*

Part II of *Henry VI*

Part I of *Henry IV*

Part III of *Henry VI*

Part II of *Henry IV*

*Richard III*

*Henry V*

*Henry VIII*

2. *On Classical Subjects*. The eight plays of the following group are based on historical or imaginative characters of Greece and Rome:

*Coriolanus*

*Pericles*

*Antony and Cleopatra*

*Timon of Athens*

*Titus Andronicus*

*Cymbeline*

*Julius Caesar*

*Troilus and Cressida*

3. The fourteen miscellaneous comedies, which show Shakespeare's humor and knowledge of mankind most clearly, are the following:

<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>
<i>The Tempest</i>	<i>As You Like It</i>
<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	<i>The Two Gentlemen of</i>
<i>All's Well That Ends Well</i>	<i>Verona</i>
<i>Love's Labor's Lost</i>	<i>Twelfth Night</i>
<i>Measure for Measure</i>	<i>Comedy of Errors</i>
<i>The Merry Wives of</i>	<i>Midsummer Night's Dream</i>
<i>Windsor</i>	<i>Winter's Tale</i>

4. *The Great Tragedies.* The five great tragedies are:

<i>Macbeth</i>	<i>King Lear</i>
<i>Hamlet</i>	<i>Othello</i>
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	

When Shakespeare died in 1616 his plays had never been collected in a volume, and many of them had never been printed. Naturally, those which were being performed upon the stage were not published, and some of them were never written down, except in the form of a kind of abbreviated shorthand, from the mouths of the actors. This naturally led to mistakes and interpolations, for it is quite the custom for actors to say things not in the play when they find them helpful in amusing or moving the audience. It is quite probable, then, that many of the plays are far from what they would have been had Shakespeare edited them himself.

That he should not have done this might seem to argue that he cared little for them as literature, and considered them wholly with the eyes of an actor. If, however, we may believe his own writings, he felt confidence in

them and a consciousness of the power of his genius. His eighty-first sonnet certainly justifies this idea :

Or I shall live, your epitaph to make,  
Or you survive, when I in earth am rotten.  
From hence your memory death cannot take,  
Altho' in me each part will be forgotten.  
Your name from hence immortal life shall have.  
Tho' I once gone to earth must die,  
The earth can yield us but a common grave,  
While you entombed in men's eyes shall lie.  
Your monument shall be my gentle verse,  
Which eyes not yet created shall o'er read,  
And tongues to be, your being shall rehearse.  
When all the breathers of this world are dead,  
You still shall live, such virtue has my pen,  
Where breath most breathes, even in the mouths of  
men.

About seven years after Shakespeare's death John Heminge and Henry Condell, two of his fellow-actors, published the first edition of his works in a large volume which contained thirty-six plays. This most valuable book is known as the folio of 1623. Previously, eighteen of these plays had been printed separately in little books called *quartos*, from which undoubtedly the editors took all they could in the composition of the new volume. A second edition was published in 1632, but it contains even more typographical errors than the first. The third edition appeared twelve years later, and the fourth in 1685. From that time on various editions and innumerable commentaries and translations have appeared, until a

collection of Shakespearean literature would furnish a huge library. Especially have the scholars of Germany distinguished themselves by their critical and philosophical consideration of the plays, and it is safe to say that there never was an author, ancient or modern, whose works have been so carefully studied and so eloquently expounded. Milton says:

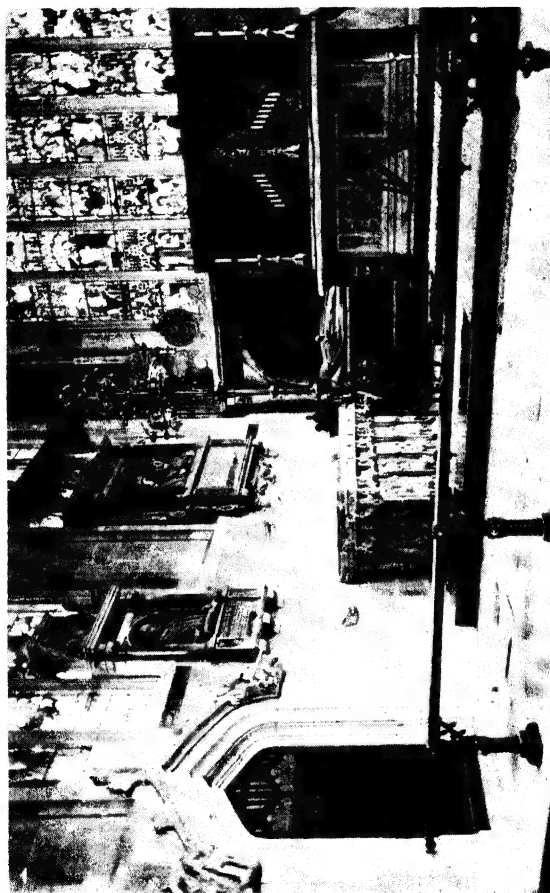
He so sepulchered in such pomp does lie,  
That kings, for such a tomb, would wish to die.

It is not within our province to discuss the plays separately, with the idea of showing what may have been Shakespeare's own work, what may have been another's, and how much may have been done in collaboration. To the thirty-six plays of the first folio, *Pericles* was subsequently added, but besides these thirty-seven, which are usually published together, there are four plays which, when printed, had the name of William Shakespeare on the title page, and of these it is probable that Shakespeare collaborated with Fletcher in the production of *Two Noble Kinsmen* and possibly wrote part of *Edward III*. As for the others, it is now considered extremely doubtful if he contributed anything to them. Then, there are three plays which had the initials, W. S., on the title page; four which bore W. Sh. on the title page; and two which are said to have been written by Shakespeare and Rawley. While each of the plays above alluded to has been by some prominent critic attributed to Shake-

speare, yet no one has been so widely accepted as to merit consideration from that point of view.

A number of the thirty-seven plays have been called in question. *Titus Andronicus* is considered of extremely doubtful authorship; only the first scenes in *Pericles* are considered Shakespeare's own; *Timon of Athens* is said to be little more than an alteration; *The Taming of the Shrew* strongly resembles a much earlier play; and the three parts of *Henry VI* have all been doubted. As for the disputed points, they will probably remain forever undecided, and the authorship will continue to be a matter of individual opinion.

As to the sources of his plots, our information is considerably more accurate, and it is quite evident that he rarely invented them, but took them from whatever source was handiest—some from novels and romances, others from legendary tales, old poems, translations from French or Italian, or, in fact, wherever he found a dramatic incident. In his Roman subjects he followed quite closely North's translation of *Plutarch's Lives*, and from Holinshed's *Chronicle* he obtained much material for his historical plays and the story of Macbeth. He must have had a quick eye for dramatic incident and an extreme readiness to seize whatever pleased his fancy. Perhaps this very lack of inventive ability, however, made him the freer in using his imagination in the development of character.



SHAKESPEAR'S TOMB AND BUST  
HOLY TRINITY CHAPEL, STRATFORD

*Alexander Photo-*  
© Ewing Galloway



VII. HIS LYRICS AND OTHER POEMS. Excepting *The Faerie Queene* alone, Shakespeare's poems are finer than those of any other writer of Elizabeth's reign. In his twenty-ninth year his *Venus and Adonis*, a narrative poem, was published with a dedication to Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton. "I know not," says Shakespeare, "how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolished lines to your lordship, nor how the world will censure me for choosing so strong a prop to support so weak a burden; only, if your honor seem but pleased, I account myself highly praised, and vow to take advantage of *all idle hours*, till I have honored you with some graver labor. But if *the first heir of my invention* prove deformed, I shall be sorry it had so noble a godfather, and never after ear [till] so barren a land." It is unfortunate that the licentiousness of this version of the well-known mythological tale should spoil it for general reading, for it is a glowing narrative, with beautiful descriptive passages, superior to the *Rape of Lucrece*, which was published the following year.

Even at this early age the author showed remarkable facility in versification and many traces of his later philosophical and reflective spirit. The following description of the horse of Adonis is an excellent illustration of the poet's descriptive power:

Look, when a painter would surpass the life  
In limning out a well-proportioned steed,



His art with Nature's workmanship at strife,  
As if the dead the living should exceed :  
So did his horse excel a common one  
In shape, in courage, color, pace, and bone.

Round-hoofed, short-jointed, fetlocks shag and long,  
Broad breast, full eye, small head, and nostril wide,  
High crest, short ears, straight legs, and passing strong,  
Thin mane, thick tail, broad buttock, tender hide :  
Look, what a horse should have, he did not lack,  
Save a proud rider on so proud a back.

Sometimes he scuds far off, and there he stares ;  
Anon he starts at stirring of a feather :  
To bid the wind a base he now prepares,  
And whe'r he run, or fly, they know not whether ;  
For through his mane and tail the high wind sings,  
Fanning the hairs, who wave like feathered wings.

After the death of Adonis, Venus utters this prophecy :

Since thou art dead, lo ! here I prophesy,  
Sorrow and love hereafter shall attend ;  
It shall be waited on with jealousy,  
Find sweet beginning, but unsavory end ;  
Ne'er settled equally, but high or low :  
That all love's pleasure should not match his woe.

It shall be fickle, false, and full of fraud ;  
Bud and be blasted in a breathing while ;  
The bottom poison, and the top o'erstrawed  
With sweets that shall the truest sight beguile.  
The strongest body shall it make most weak,  
Strike the wise dumb, and teach the fool to speak.

It shall be sparing, and too full of riot,  
Teaching decrepit age to tread the measures ;  
The staring ruffian shall it keep in quiet,  
Pluck down the rich, enrich the poor with treasures ;

It shall be raging mad, and silly mild,  
Make the young old, the old become a child.

It shall suspect, where is no cause of fear;  
It shall not fear, where it should most mistrust;  
It shall be merciful, and too severe,  
And most deceiving when it seems most just:  
Perverse it shall be, when it seems most toward,  
Put fear to valor, courage to the coward.

It shall be cause of war and dire events,  
And set dissension 'twixt the son and sire:  
Subject and servile to all discontents,  
As dry combustious matter is to fire.  
Sith in his prime, death doth my love destroy,  
They that love best, their love shall not enjoy.

The sonnets of Shakespeare, of which there are over one hundred fifty, were first printed in 1609. Fewer than thirty are addressed to other than a male subject, and the latter group abounds with extravagant expressions of affection that were remarkable, even in that enthusiastic age. In all probability the sonnets were written at different times, with long intervals between, and though wonderful as many are in language and imagery, their excessive praise of manly beauty detracts from their interest. Yet, there are in the collection a number of beautiful ones that will delight the most critical reader. The ninety-ninth is an example of such:

The forward violet thus did I chide;—  
Sweet thief, whence didst thou steal thy sweet that smells,  
If not from my love's breath? The purple pride  
Which on thy soft cheek for complexion dwells,

In my love's veins thou hast too grossly dyed.  
 The lily I condemned for thy hand,  
 And buds of marjoram had stolen thy hair:  
 The roses fearfully on thorns did stand,  
 One blushing shame, another white despair;  
 A third, nor red nor white, had stolen of both,  
 And to his robbery had annexed thy breath;  
 But for his theft, in pride of all his growth  
 A vengeful canker eat him up to death.

More flowers I noted, yet I none could see,  
 But sweet or color it had stolen from thee.

Many of the sonnets are linked together in long sequences upon the same theme. One of the best is the following:

Let me not to the marriage of true minds  
 Admit impediments. Love is not love  
 Which alters when it alteration finds,  
 Or bends with the remover to remove:  
 O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark  
 That looks on tempests and is never shaken;  
 It is the star to every wandering bark,  
 Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken;  
 Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks  
 Within his bending sickle's compass come;  
 Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,  
 But bears it out even to the edge of doom.  
 If this be error and upon me proved,  
 I never writ nor no man ever loved.

The following three, though not taken in their natural order, must suffice us:

From you have I been absent in the spring,  
 When proud-pied April, dressed in all his trim,  
 Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing,  
 That heavy Saturn laughed and leaped with him.  
 Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell  
 Of different flowers in odor and in hue,

Could make me any summer's story tell,  
 Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew.  
 Nor do I wonder at the lilies white,  
 Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;  
 They were but sweet, but figures of delight,  
 Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.  
 Yet seemed it winter still, and, you away,  
 As with your shadow I with these did play.

---

Alas, 'tis true, I have gone here and there,  
 And made myself a motley to the view,  
 Gored mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear,  
 Made old offenses of affections new.  
 Most true it is, that I have looked on truth  
 Askance and strangely: but, by all above,  
 These blenches gave my heart another youth,  
 And worst essays proved thee my best of love.  
 Now all is done, save what shall have no end:  
 Mine appetite I never more will grind  
 On newer proof, to try an older friend,  
 A god in love, to whom I am confined.  
 Then give me welcome, next my heaven the best,  
 E'en to thy pure and most, most loving breast.

---

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought  
 I summon up remembrance of things past,  
 I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,  
 And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:  
 Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,  
 For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,  
 And weep afresh love's long-since-canceled woe,  
 And moan the expense of many a vanished sight.  
 Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,  
 And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er  
 The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,  
 Which I new pay as if not paid before:  
 But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,  
 All losses are restored, and sorrows end.

Some of the choicest of his lyrics are found within the dramas, as, for instance, the following, from *As You Like It*:

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,

Thou art not so unkind

As man's ingratitude!

Thy tooth is not so keen,

Because thou art not seen,

Although thy breath be rude.

Heigh ho! sing, heigh ho! unto the green holly:

Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly.

Then, heigh ho, the holly!

This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,

That dost not bite so nigh

As benefits forgot!

Though thou the waters warp,

Thy sting is not so sharp

As friend remembered not.

Heigh ho! etc.

Ariel's song from *The Tempest* is a charming lyric:

Where the bee sucks, there suck I;

In a cowslip's bell I lie:

There I couch when owls do cry,

On the bat's back I do fly

After summer merrily:

Merrily, merrily, shall I live now,

Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

The Fairy sings to Puck, in *Midsummer Night's Dream*:

Over hill, over dale,

Thorough bush, thorough brier,

Over park, over pale,

Thorough flood, thorough fire,

I do wander everywhere,  
Swifter than the moon's sphere;  
And I serve the fairy queen,  
To dew her orbs upon the green:  
The cowslips tall her pensioners be;  
In their gold coats spots you see;  
Those be rubies, fairy favors,  
In those freckles live their savors:  
I must go seek some dew-drops here,  
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.

The following song is from *As You Like It*:

Under the greenwood tree,  
Who loves to lie with me,  
And tune his merry note  
Unto the sweet bird's throat,  
Come hither, come hither, come hither;  
Here shall he see  
No enemy  
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun,  
And loves to live i' the sun,  
Seeking the food he eats,  
And pleased with what he gets,  
Come hither, come hither, come hither;  
Here shall he see  
No enemy  
But winter and rough weather.

This is from *Cymbeline*:

Fear no more the heat o' the sun,  
Nor the furious winter's rages;  
Thou thy worldly task hath done,  
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages:  
Golden lads and girls all must,  
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.  
Fear no more the frown o' the great,  
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke;

Care no more to clothe and eat,  
To thee the reed is as the oak.  
The scepter, learning, physic, must  
All follow this, and come to dust.

Fear no more the lightning-flash,  
Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;  
Fear not slander, censure rash;  
Thou hast finished joy and moan.  
All lovers young, all lovers must  
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

No exorcisor harm thee!  
Nor no witchcraft charm thee!  
Ghost unlaid forbear thee!  
Nothing ill come near thee!  
Quiet consummation have,  
And renowned be thy grave!

The following lyric is found in *Much Ado About Nothing*:

Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more;  
Men were deceivers ever;  
One foot in sea, and one on shore;  
To one thing constant never:  
Then sigh not so,  
But let them go,  
And be you blithe and bonny;  
Converting all your sounds of woe  
Into, Hey nonny, nonny.

Sing no more ditties, sing no moe  
Of dumps so dull and heavy;  
The fraud of men was ever so,  
Since summer first was leavy.  
Then sigh not so, etc.

At the end of *Love's Labor's Lost* appears this:

When icicles hang by the wall,  
 And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,  
 And Tom bears logs into the hall,  
 And milk comes frozen home in pail;  
 When blood is nipt, and ways be foul,  
 Then nightly sings the staring owl,  
     Tu-whoo!  
 Tu-whit! tu-whoo! a merry note,  
 While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,  
 And coughing drowns the parson's saw,  
 And birds sit brooding in the snow,  
 And Marian's nose looks red and raw;  
 When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,  
 Then nightly sings the staring owl,  
     Tu-whoo!  
 Tu-whit! tu-whoo! a merry note,  
 While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

This morning song is from *Cymbeline*:

Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,  
 And Phoebus 'gins arise,  
 His steeds to water at those springs  
 On chaliced flowers that lies;  
 And winking Mary-buds begin  
 To ope their golden eyes:  
 With everything that pretty is,  
 My lady sweet, arise!  
     Arise, arise!

VIII. CHOICE SPECIMENS FROM THE DRAMAS.  
 The only proper method to study Shakespeare is from the plays themselves. No amount of commentary, criticism or exposition will ever give the student the feeling and appreciation which he can obtain from independent reading. The range of the plays is so vast, the number



of characters so great, the beautiful descriptions so numerous and the profoundly thoughtful passages or brief sentences so common that no extracts can convey any idea of their extent and value. It is difficult to see what should be included in a work like this. We think of inserting one play for intensive study, but it is impossible to decide which to use, for so many equally interesting ones will remain untouched. Then we turn to the idea of making extracts, but they mutilate the plays, destroy the dramatic effect, and give an utterly inadequate idea of the great master's genius. However, it seems wise, all things considered, to follow the latter plan, to give a few of the greatest and most famous passages, with a recommendation that each be the beginning of a wider reading from the plays themselves. All are now accessible in so many excellent editions at such a reasonable price that no reader need have any difficulty in obtaining them, and every one must be conscious that ignorance of Shakespeare is ignorance indeed.

The following extract on perseverance is from *Troilus and Cressida*:

Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back,  
Wherein he puts alms for Oblivion,  
A great-sized monster of ingratitude:  
Those scraps are good deeds past, which are devoured  
As fast as they are made, forgot as soon  
As done. Perseverance, dear my lord,  
Keeps honor bright: to have done, is to hang  
Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail  
In monumental mockery. Take the instant way,

For honor travels in a strait so narrow,  
 Where but one goes abreast : Keep, then, the path ;  
 For Emulation hath a thousand sons,  
 That one by one pursue : if you give way,  
 Or hedge aside from the direct forthright,  
 Like to an entered tide, they all rush by,  
 And leave you hindmost ;—  
 Or, like a gallant horse, fall'n in first rank,  
 Lie there for pavement to the abject rear,  
 O'er-run and trampled on : then what they do in present,  
 Though less than yours in past, must o'ertop yours ;  
 For Time is like a fashionable host,  
 That slightly shakes his parting guest by the hand,  
 And with his arms outstretched, as he would fly,  
 Grasps in the comer ; Welcome ever smiles,  
 And Farewell goes out sighing. Oh ! let not Virtue seek  
 Remuneration for the thing it was ; for beauty, wit,  
 High birth, vigor of bone, desert in service,  
 Love, friendship, charity, are subjects all  
 To envious and calumniating Time.  
 One touch of nature makes the whole world kin—  
 That all with one consent praise new-born gawds,  
 Though they are made and molded of things past,  
 And give to dust that is a little gilt,  
 More laud than gilt o'er-dusted :  
 The present eye praises the present object.

The power of imagination, from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* :

*Theseus.* I never may believe  
 These antique fables, nor these fairy toys.  
 Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,  
 Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend  
 More than cool reason ever comprehends.  
 The lunatic, the lover, and the poet,  
 Are of imagination all compact :  
 One sees more devils than vast hell can hold—  
 That is the madman : the lover, all as frantic,

Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:  
 The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
 Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to  
 heaven,

And, as imagination bodies forth  
 The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen  
 Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing  
 A local habitation and a name.  
 Such tricks hath strong imagination;  
 That, if it would but apprehend some joy,  
 It comprehends some bringer of that joy;  
 Or, in the night, imagining some fear,  
 How easy is a bush supposed a bear!

The lamentation of Constance, from *King John*:

*K. Philip.*

Bind up your hairs.

*Const.* Yes, that I will; And wherefore will I do it?

I tore them from their bonds; and cried aloud,  
 O that these hands could so redeem my son,  
 As they have given these hairs their liberty!  
 But now I envy at their liberty,  
 And will again commit them to their bonds  
 Because my poor child is a prisoner.  
 And, father cardinal, I have heard you say,  
 That we shall see and know our friends in heaven:  
 If that be true, I shall see my boy again;  
 For, since the birth of Cain, the first male child,  
 To him that did but yesterday suspire,  
 There was not such a gracious creature born.  
 But now will canker sorrow eat my bud,  
 And chase the native beauty from his cheek,  
 And he will look as hollow as a ghost;  
 As dim and meager as an ague's fit;  
 And so he'll die; and, rising so again,  
 When I shall meet him in the court of heaven  
 I shall not know him: therefore never, never  
 Must I behold my pretty Arthur more.

*Pandulph.* You hold too heinous a respect of grief.

*Const.* He talks to me that never had a son.

*K. Phi.* You are as fond of grief as of your child.

*Const.* Grief fills the room up of my absent child,

Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me,

Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,

Remembers me of all his gracious parts,

Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form;

Then, have I reason to be fond of grief.

Fare you well: had you such a loss as I,

I could give better comfort than you do.—

I will not keep this form upon my head,

[*Tearing off her head-dress.*]

When there is such disorder in my wit.

O Lord! my boy, my Arthur, my fair son!

My life, my joy, my food, my all the world!

My widow-comfort, and my sorrows' cure!

The world a stage, from *As You Like It*:

All the world's a stage,

And all the men and women merely players;

They have their exits and their entrances,

And one man in his time plays many parts,

His acts being seven ages. At first, the infant,

Mewling and puking in his nurse's arms:

And then, the whining school-boy, with his satchel

And shining morning face, creeping like snail

Unwillingly to school. And then, the lover,

Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad

Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then the soldier,

Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,

Jealous in honor, sudden and quick in quarrel;

Seeking the bubble reputation

Even in the cannon's mouth. And then, the justice,

In fair round belly, with good capon lined,

With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,

Full of wise saws and modern instances;

And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts

Into the lean and slippered pantaloon,

With spectacles on nose, and pouch on side;

His youthful hose well saved, a world too wide  
For his shrunk shanks; and his big manly voice,  
Turning again towards childish treble, pipes  
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,  
That ends this strange eventful history,  
Is second childishness, and mere oblivion:  
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

On the fear of death, from *Measure for Measure*:

Ay, but to die, and go we know not where;  
To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot;  
This sensible warm motion to become  
A kneaded clod; and the delighted spirit  
To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside  
In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice;  
To be imprisoned in the viewless winds,  
And blown with restless violence round about  
The pendent world; or to be worse than worst  
Of those, that lawless and incertain thoughts  
Imagine howling: 'tis too horrible!  
The weariest and most loathed worldly life,  
That age, ache, penury, and imprisonment  
Can lay on nature, is a paradise  
To what we fear of death.

Wolsey and Cromwell, from *Henry VIII*:

*Wol.* Farewell, a long farewell, to all my greatness!  
This is the state of man: To-day he puts forth  
The tender leaves of hopes, to-morrow blossoms,  
And bears his blushing honors thick upon him;  
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost;  
And,—when he thinks, good easy man, full surely  
His greatness is a ripening,—nips his root,  
And then he falls, as I do. I have ventured,  
Like little wanton boys that swim on bladders,  
This many summers in a sea of glory,  
But far beyond my depth: my high-blown pride  
At length broke under me; and now has left me,

Weary, and old with service, to the mercy  
 Of a rude stream, that must forever hide me.  
 Vain pomp and glory of this world, I hate ye;  
 I feel my heart new opened: Oh, how wretched  
 Is that poor man that hangs on princes' favors!  
 There is, betwixt that smile we would aspire to,  
 That sweet aspect of princes, and their ruin,  
 More pangs and fears than wars or women have;  
 And when he falls, he falls like Lucifer,  
 Never to hope again.— . . .

. . . Why, how now, Cromwell?

*Crom.* I have no power to speak, sir.

*Wol.* What, amazed  
 At my misfortunes? can thy spirit wonder  
 A great man should decline? Nay, an you weep,  
 I am fallen indeed.

*Crom.* How does your grace?

*Wol.* Why, well;  
 Never so truly happy, my good Cromwell.  
 I know myself now; and I feel within me  
 A peace above all earthly dignities,  
 A still and quiet conscience. The king has cured me,  
 I humbly thank his grace; and from these shoulders,  
 These ruined pillars, out of pity, taken  
 A load would sink a navy, too much honor:  
 Oh, 'tis a burden, Cromwell, 'tis a burden,  
 Too heavy for a man that hopes for heaven.

Cromwell, I did not think to shed a tear  
 In all my miseries; but thou hast forced me  
 Out of thy honest truth to play the woman.  
 Let's dry our eyes: and thus far hear me, Cromwell:  
 And when I am forgotten, as I shall be,  
 And sleep in dull, cold marble, where no mention  
 Of me more must be heard of, say I taught thee;  
 Say Wolsey—that once trod the ways of glory,  
 And sounded all the depths and shoals of honor—  
 Found thee a way, out of his wrack, to rise in;  
 A sure and safe one, though thy master missed it.

Mark but my fall, and that that ruined me.  
 Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition;  
 By that sin fell the angels; how can man then,  
 The image of his Maker, hope to win by't?  
 Love thyself last; cherish those hearts that hate thee;  
 Corruption wins not more than honesty.  
 Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace,  
 To silence envious tongues. Be just, and fear not:  
 Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,  
 Thy God's and truth's; then if thou fall'st, O Crom-  
 well,  
 Thou fall'st a blessed martyr. Serve the king;  
 And— Prithee, lead me in:  
 There take an inventory of all I have,  
 To the last penny; 'tis the king's: my robe,  
 And my integrity to heaven, is all  
 I dare now call my own. O Cromwell, Cromwell,  
 Had I but served my God with half the zeal  
 I served my king, he would not in mine age  
 Have left me naked to mine enemies.

### Macbeth's irresolution:

*Macb.* If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well  
 It were done quickly: If the assassination  
 Could trammel up the consequence, and catch,  
 With his surcease, success; that but this blow  
 Might be the be-all and the end-all, here,  
 But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,  
 We'd jump the life to come.—But in these cases,  
 We still have judgment here; that we but teach  
 Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return  
 To plague the inventor: This even-handed justice  
 Commends the ingredients of our poisoned chalice  
 To our own lips. He's here in double trust:  
 First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,  
 Strong both against the deed: then, as his host,  
 Who should against his murderer shut the door,  
 Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan  
 Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been

So clear in his great office, that his virtues  
 Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against  
 The deep damnation of his taking-off :  
 And pity, like a naked new-born babe,  
 Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubim, horsed  
 Upon the sightless couriers of the air,  
 Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,  
 That tears shall drown the wind.—I have no spur  
 To prick the sides of my intent, but only  
 Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself,  
 And falls on the other.

### Hamlet's soliloquy :

*Ham.* To be, or not to be, that is the question :  
 Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer  
 The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,  
 Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,  
 And by opposing end them ? To die,—to sleep,—  
 No more ; and, by a sleep, to say we end  
 The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks  
 That flesh is heir to,—'tis a consummation  
 Devoutly to be wished. To die,—to sleep ;—  
 To sleep ! perchance to dream ;—ay, there's the rub ;  
 For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,  
 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,  
 Must give us pause : there's the respect,  
 That makes calamity of so long life :  
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,  
 The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,  
 The pangs of disprized love, the law's delay,  
 The insolence of office, and the spurns  
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,  
 When he himself might his quietus make  
 With a bare bodkin ? Who would these fardels bear,  
 To grunt and sweat under a weary life ;  
 But that the dread of something after death,  
 The undiscovered country, from whose bourn  
 No traveler returns, puzzles the will ;  
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have,



Than fly to others that we know not of?  
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;  
And thus the native hue of resolution  
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;  
And enterprises of great pith and moment,  
With this regard, their currents turn awry,  
And lose the name of action.

The garden scene, in *Romeo and Juliet*:

*Romeo.* He jests at scars that never felt a wound.—

[*Juliet appears above, at a window.*

But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks!

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!—

Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,

Who is already sick and pale with grief,

That thou her maid art far more fair than she;

Be not her maid, since she is envious;

Her vestal livery is but sick and green.

And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.—

It is my lady; O! it is my love;

O that she knew she were!—

She speaks, yet she says nothing. What of that?

Her eye discourses; I will answer it.—

I am too bold; 'tis not to me she speaks:

Two of the fairest stars of all the heaven,

Having some business, do entreat her eyes

To twinkle in their spheres till they return.

What if her eyes were there, they in her head?

The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,

As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven

Would through the airy region stream so bright,

That birds would sing, and think it were not night.

See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!

O that I were a glove upon that hand,

That I might touch that cheek!

*Juliet.* Ah me!

*Rom.* She speaks.

Oh, speak again, bright angel! for thou art

As glorious to this sight, being o'er my head,

As is a winged messenger of heaven  
 Unto the white-upturned, wond'ring eyes  
 Of mortals, that fall back to gaze on him,  
 When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds,  
 And sails upon the bosom of the air.

*Jul.* O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?  
 Deny thy father, and refuse thy name:  
 Or if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,  
 And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

*Rom.* Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

*Jul.* 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy:  
 Thou art thyself though, not a Montague.  
 What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot,  
 Nor arm, nor face—nor any other part  
 Belonging to a man. Oh, be some other name!  
 What's in a name? That which we call a rose,  
 By any other name would smell as sweet.  
 So Romeo would, were he not Romeo called,  
 Retain that dear perfection which he owes,  
 Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name;  
 And for that name, which is no part of thee,  
 Take all myself!

*Rom.* I take thee at thy word:  
 Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized;  
 Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

*Jul.* What man art thou, that thus, bescreened in night,  
 So stumblest on my counsel?

*Rom.* By a name  
 I know not how to tell thee who I am:  
 My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself.  
 Because it is an enemy to thee.  
 Had I it written, I would tear the word.

*Jul.* My ears have yet not drunk a hundred words  
 Of that tongue's uttering, yet I know the sound.  
 Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?

*Rom.* Neither, fair saint, if either thee dislike.

*Jul.* How cam'st thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?  
 The orchard walls are high, and hard to climb;  
 And the place death, considering who thou art,

If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

*Rom.* With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls,

For stony limits cannot hold love out ;

And what love can do, that dares love attempt :

Therefore thy kinsmen are no let to me.

*Jul.* If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

*Rom.* Alack ! there lies more peril in thine eyes

Than twenty of their swords ; look thou sweet,

And I am proof against their enmity.

*Jul.* I would not for the world they saw thee here.

*Rom.* I have night's cloak to hide me from their eyes ;

And but thou love me, let them find me here ;

My life were better ended by their hate,

Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love.

*Jul.* By whose direction found'st thou out this place ?

*Rom.* By love, that first did prompt me to inquire ;

He lent me counsel, and I lent him eyes.

I am no pilot ; yet, wert thou as far

As that vast shore washed with the farthest sea,

I would adventure for such merchandise.

*Jul.* Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,

Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek

For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.

Fain would I dwell on form ; fain, fain deny

What I have spoke—but farewell compliment !

Dost thou love me ? I know thou wilt say—Ay ;

And I will take thy word. Yet, if thou swear'st,

Thou may'st prove false : at lovers' perjuries,

They say, Jove laughs. O, gentle Romeo !

If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully ;

Or, if thou think'st I am too quickly won,

I'll frown and be perverse, and say thee nay,

So thou wilt woo : but, else, not for the world.

In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,

And therefore thou may'st think my 'havior light ;

But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true

Than those that have more coying to be strange.

I should have been more strange, I must confess,



*From Painting by Dicksee*

ROMEO AND JULIET



But that thou overheard'st, ere I was 'ware,  
My true love's passion ; therefore pardon me,  
And not impute this yielding to light love,  
Which the dark night hath so discovered.

*Rom.* Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear,  
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops—

*Jul.* O swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon,  
That monthly changes in her circled orb :  
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

*Rom.* What shall I swear by ?

*Jul.* Do not swear at all ;  
Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,  
Which is the god of my idolatry,  
And I'll believe thee.

*Rom.* If my heart's dear love—

*Jul.* Well, do not swear. Although I joy in thee,  
I have no joy of this contract to-night ;  
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden ;  
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be,  
Ere one can say, It lightens ! Sweet, good-night !  
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,  
May prove a beauteous flower, when next we meet.  
Good-night, good-night—as sweet repose and rest  
Come to thy heart, as that within my breast !

### The ghost scene, in *Hamlet* :

*Hamlet.* The air bites shrewdly ; it is very cold.

*Horatio.* It is a nipping and an eager air.

*Ham.* What hour now ?

*Hor.* I think it lacks of twelve.

*Marcellus.* No, it is struck.

*Hor.* Indeed ? I heard it not. It then draws near the  
season

Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[*Noise of warlike music within.*]

What does this mean, my lord ?

*Ham.* The king doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse,  
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels ;  
And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,

The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out  
The triumph of his pledge.

*Hor.* Is it a custom?

*Ham.* Ay, marry, is 't:

But to my mind—though I am native here,  
And to the manner born—it is a custom  
More honored in the breach than the observance.  
This heavy-headed revel, east and west,  
Makes us traduced, and taxed of other nations;  
They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase  
Soil our addition; and, indeed, it takes  
From our achievements, though performed at height,  
The pith and marrow of our attribute.  
So, oft it chanches in particular men,  
That for some vicious mole of nature in them,  
As in their birth (wherein they are not guilty,  
Since nature cannot choose his origin),  
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,  
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason;  
Or by some habit, that too much o'er-leavens  
The form of plausive manners; that these men,  
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect;  
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,  
Their virtues else, be they as pure as grace,  
As infinite as man may undergo,  
Shall in the general censure take corruption  
From that particular fault: The dram of base  
Doth all the noble substance often dout,  
To his own scandal.

*Enter GHOST*

*Hor.* Look, my lord, it comes!

*Ham.* Angels and ministers of grace defend us!—  
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damned,  
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,  
Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,  
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,  
That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee, Hamlet,  
King, Father, Royal Dane; Oh, answer me;

Let me not burst in ignorance ! but tell  
 Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,  
 Have burst their cerements ! why the sepulcher,  
 Wherein we saw thee quietly inurned,  
 Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws,  
 To cast thee up again ! What may this mean,  
 That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel,  
 Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,  
 Making night hideous ; and we fools of nature,  
 So horribly to shake our disposition,  
 With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls ?  
 Say, why is this ? Wherefore ? What should we do ?  
[*Ghost beckons Hamlet.*]

*Hor.* It beckons you to go away with it,  
 As if it some impartment did desire  
 To you alone.

*Mar.* Look, with what courteous action  
 It waves you off to a removed ground :  
 But do not go with it.

*Hor.* No, by no means. [*Holding Hamlet.*]

*Ham.* It will not speak : then I will follow it.

*Hor.* Do not, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, what should be the fear ?  
 I do not set my life at a pin's fee ;  
 And, for my soul, what can it do to that,  
 Being a thing immortal as itself ?  
 It waves me forth again.—I'll follow it.

*Hor.* What if it tempt you toward the flood, my  
 lord,

Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,  
 That beetles o'er his base into the sea ;  
 And there assume some other horrible form,  
 Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason,  
 And draw you into madness ? Think of it.  
 The very place puts toys of desperation,  
 Without more motive, into every brain,  
 That looks so many fathoms to the sea,  
 And hears it roar beneath.

*Ham.* It waves me still.—Go on, I'll follow thee.



The scene of the grave-diggers, from *Hamlet*:

*1st Grave-digger.* Is she to be buried in Christian burial, that willfully seeks her own salvation?

*2nd Grave-digger.* I tell thee she is; therefore make her grave, straight; the crowners hath sate on her, and finds it Christian burial.

*1st Grave-digger.* How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defense?

*2nd Grave-digger.* Why, 'tis found so.

*1st Grave-digger.* It must be *se offendendo*; it cannot be else; for here lies the point: If I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act, and an act has three branches—it is to act, to do and to perform; argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

*2nd Grave-digger.* Nay, but hear you, good man delver,—

*1st Grave-digger.* Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good: if the man go to this water and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes; mark you that; but if the water come to him and drown him, he drowns not himself; argal, he, that is not guilty of his own death, shortens not his own life.

*2nd Grave-digger.* But is this law?

*1st Grave-digger.* Ay, marry is it, crowner's quest law.

*2nd Grave-digger.* Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of Christian burial.

*1st Grave-digger.* Why there thou say'st. And the more pity, that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves more than their even Christian. Come, my spade! There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers and grave-makers: they hold up Adam's profession.

*2nd Grave-digger.* Was he a gentleman?

*1st Grave-digger.* He was the first that ever bore arms.

*2d.* Why, he had none.

*1st.* What, art thou a heathen? How dost thou under-

stand the Scripture? The Scripture says Adam digged. Could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee; if thou answereth not to the purpose, confess thyself—

2d. Go to.

1st. What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright or the carpenter?

2d. The gallows-maker, for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1st. I like thy wit well, in good faith; the gallows does well; but *how* doth it well? It does well to those that do ill. Now thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church; argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To 't again, come.

2d. Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright or a carpenter?

1st. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

2nd. Marry, now I can tell.

1st. To 't.

2nd. Mass. I cannot tell.

*Enter HAMLET, the Prince of Denmark, and his friend HORATIO, at a distance.*

1st. Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and when you are asked this question next, say the *grave-maker*. The houses that he makes last till dooms-day. Go, get thee to Yaughan; fetch me a stoup of liquor.

*[2nd grave-digger exit.]*

1st. (*digs and sings*)—

In youth when I did love, did love,

Methought 't was very sweet

To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my behove,

O, methought, there was nothing meet.

*Hamlet.* Hath this fellow no feeling for his business, that he sings at grave-making?

*Horatio.* Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

*Hamlet.* 'T is e'en so; the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

*1st Grave-digger (sings):*

But age, with his stealing steps,

Hath clawed me in his clutch,

And hath shipped me intil the land

As if I had never been such. [*Throws up a skull.*]

*Hamlet.* That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once; how the knave jowls it to the ground as if it were Cain's jawbone, that did the first murder! It might be the pate of a politician that this ass now o'erreaches—one that could circumvent God—might it not?

*Horatio.* It might, my lord.

*Hamlet.* Or of a courtier, which could say, "Good morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?" This might be my lord Such-a-one, that praised my lord Such-a-one's horse when he meant to beg it; might 't not?

*Horatio.* Ay, my lord.

*Hamlet.* Why, e'en so; and now, my Lady Worm's; chapless and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade; there's fine revolution, if we had trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with them? Mine ache to think on 't. (*Grave-digger throws up another skull.*)

*Hamlet.* There's another! Why might not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits now, his quilllets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? Why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the scouce with a dirty shovel and will not tell him of his action of battery? Humph! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries; is this the fine of his fines and the recovery of his recoveries to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? Will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? the very conveyances of his lands

will hardly lie in this box, and must the inheritor himself have no more? . . . I will speak to this fellow (*to the grave-digger*). Whose grave is this, sir?

*1st Grave-digger.* Mine, sir.

*Hamlet.* I think it be thine, indeed, for thou liest in it.

*1st Grave-digger.* You lie out on 't, sir, and therefore 'tis not yours; for my part, I do not lie in 't, and yet 'tis mine. . . .

*Hamlet.* What man dost thou dig it for?

*1st Grave-digger.* For no man, sir.

*Hamlet.* What woman, then?

*1st Grave-digger.* For none neither.

*Hamlet.* Who is to be buried in it?

*1st Grave-digger.* One that was a woman, sir. But, rest her soul, she's dead.

*Hamlet.* How absolute the knave is! We must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord! Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it, the age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier he galls his kibe. . . .

*1st Grave-digger (picking up a skull).* Here's a skull now; this skull hath lain in the earth three-and-twenty years.

*Hamlet.* Whose was it?

*1st Grave-digger.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! a' poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir: this same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

*Hamlet.* This!

*1st Grave-digger.* E'en that.

*Hamlet.* Let me see. (*Takes the skull.*) Alas! poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy; he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now how abhorred in my imagination is it; my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table

in a roar? Not one now to mock your own jeering!  
Quite chap-fallen! Now get you to my lady's  
chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to  
this favor she must come; make her laugh at that!

Prospero's Tale to Miranda, in *The Tempest*:

*Miranda.* If by your art, my dearest father, you have  
Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them;  
The sky, it seems, would pour down stinking pitch,  
But that the sea, mounting to the welkin's cheek,  
Dashes the fire out. Oh, I have suffered  
With those that I saw suffer! A brave vessel,  
Which had no doubt some noble creature in her,  
Dashed all to pieces. Oh, the cry did knock  
Against my very heart! Poor souls! they perished.  
Had I been any god of power I would  
Have sunk the sea within the earth, or e'er  
It should the good ship so have swallowed, and  
The fraughting souls within her.

*Prospero.* Be collected; no more amazement;  
Tell your piteous heart there's no harm done.

*Mira.* O, woe the day!

*Pros.* No harm.

I have done nothing but in care of thee,  
(Of thee, my dear one! thee my daughter,) who  
Art ignorant of what thou art, naught knowing  
Of whence I am; nor that I am more better  
Than Prospero, master of a full poor cell,  
And thy no greater father.

*Mira.* More to know

Did never meddle with my thoughts.

*Pros.* 'Tis time

I should inform thee farther. Lend thy hand  
And pluck my magic garment from me—so;  
Lie there, my art.—Wipe thou thine eyes; have com-  
fort. [*He lays down his mantle.*]

The direful spectacle of the wreck which touched

The very virtue of compassion in thee,  
 I have, with such provision in mine art,  
 So safely ordered, that there is no soul—  
 No, not so much perdition as a hair,  
 Betid to any creature in the vessel  
 Which thou heard'st cry, which thou saw'st sink. Sit  
 down,

For now thou must know further.

*Mira.* You have often  
 Began to tell me what I am; but stopped  
 And left me to a bootless inquisition;  
 Concluding—"stay, not yet."

*Pros.* The hour's now come:  
 The very minute bids thee ope thine ear;  
 Obey, and be attentive. Canst thou remember  
 A time before we came into this cell?  
 I do not think thou canst; for then thou wast not  
 Out three years old.

*Mira.* Certainly, sir, I can.

*Pros.* By what? by any other house or person?  
 Of anything the image tell me, that  
 Hath kept with thy remembrance.

*Mira.* 'Tis far off,  
 And rather like a dream than an assurance  
 That my remembrance warrants. Had I not  
 Four or five women once that tended me?

*Pros.* Thou hadst, and more, Miranda. But how is it  
 That this lives in thy mind? What see'st thou else  
 In the dark backward and abysm of time?  
 If thou remember'st aught ere thou cam'st here,  
 How thou cam'st here thou may'st.

*Mira.* But that I do not.

*Pros.* Twelve years since, Miranda, twelve years since,  
 Thy father was the Duke of Milan, and  
 A prince of power. . . .

*Mira.* Oh, the heavens!  
 What foul play had we that we came from thence?  
 Or blessed was't we did?

*Pros.* Both, both, my girl;

By foul play, as thou say'st, were we heaved thence,  
But blessedly help hither.

*Mira.* Oh, my heart bleeds

To think of the teen that I have turned you to,  
Which is from my remembrance. Please you, farther.

*Pros.* My brother and thy uncle, called Antonio,—

I pray thee mark me that a brother should  
Be so perfidious—he whom next thyself  
Of all the world I loved, and to him put  
The manage of my state, as, at that time,  
Thro' all the signiories it was the first,  
And Prospero the prime duke, being so reputed  
In dignity; and for the liberal arts  
Without a parallel; those being all my study,  
The government I cast upon my brother,  
And to my state grew stranger, being transported  
And rapt in secret studies. Thy false uncle—  
Dost thou attend me?

*Mira.* O, good sir, I do.

*Pros.* I pray thee mark me.

I thus neglecting worldly ends, all dedicated  
To closeless, and the bettering of my mind  
With that, which, but by being so retired,  
O'erprized all popular rate, in my false brother  
Awaked an evil nature; and my trust  
Like a good parent, did beget of him  
A falsehood, in its contrary as great  
As my trust was; which had, indeed, no limit,  
A confidence sans bound. He being thus lorded,  
Not only with what my revenue yielded,  
But what my power might else exact—like one  
Who, having unto truth, by telling of it,  
Made such a sinner of his memory  
To credit his own lie—he did believe  
He was indeed the duke. . . . Hence, his ambition  
growing—

Dost thou hear?

*Mira.* Your tale, sir, would cure deafness.

*Pros.* To have no screen between this part he played

And him he played it for, he needs will be  
 Absolute Milan. Me, poor man! my library  
 Was dukedom large enough; of temporal royalties  
 He thinks me now incapable, confederates  
 With the King of Naples  
 To give him annual tribute, do him homage;  
 Subject his coronet to his crown, and bend  
 The dukedom, yet unbowed (alas! poor Milan!)  
 To most ignoble stooping.

*Mira.* Oh, the heavens!

*Pros.* Now the condition.

This King of Naples, being an enemy  
 To me inveterate, hearkens my brother's suit,  
 Which was, that he, in lieu of the premises—  
 Of homage, and I know not how much tribute—  
 Should presently extirpate me and mine  
 Out of the dukedom; and confer fair Milan,  
 With all the honors, on my brother. Whereon  
 A treacherous army levied, one midnight  
 Fated to the purpose, did Antonio open  
 The gates of Milan; and in the dead of darkness  
 The ministers for the purpose hurried thence,  
 Me, and thy crying self.

*Mira.* Alack, for pity!

I not remembering how I cried out then,  
 Will cry it o'er again; it is a hint  
 That wrings mine eyes to it.

Wherefore did they not that hour destroy us?

*Pros.* Well demanded, wench,

My tale provokes that question. Dear, they durst not—  
 So dear the love my people bore me—nor set  
 A mark so bloody on the business; but  
 With colors fairer painted their foul ends.  
 In few, they hurried us aboard a bark—  
 Bore us some leagues to sea; where they prepared  
 A rotten carcass of boat; not rigged,  
 Nor tackle, sail, nor mast; the very rats  
 Instinctively have quit it; there they hoist us,



To cry to the sea that roared to us; to sigh  
 To the winds, whose pity, sighing back again,  
 Did us but loving wrong.

*Mira.* Alack! what trouble

Was I then to you.

*Pros.* Oh, a cherubim

Thou wast that did preserve me! Thou didst smile,  
 Infused with a fortitude from Heaven,  
 When I have decked the sea with drops full salt,  
 Under my burden groaned; which raised in me  
 An undergoing stomach, to bear up  
 Against what should ensue.

### The funeral of Julius Caesar:

*Scene—The Forum in Rome. Present—BRUTUS and  
 CASSIUS and a throng of citizens.*

*Citizens.* We will be satisfied; let us be satisfied.

*Brutus.* Then follow me, and give me audience, friends.—

Cassius, go you into the other street,  
 And part the numbers.—

Those that will hear me speak, let 'em stay here;

Those that will follow Cassius, go with him;

And public reasons shall be rendered

Of Caesar's death.

*First Citizen.* I will hear Brutus speak.

*Second Citizen.* I will hear Cassius; and compare their  
 reasons,

When severally we hear them rendered.

[*Exit CASSIUS, with some of the Citizens. BRUTUS goes  
 into the pulpit.*]

*Third Citizen.* The noble Brutus is ascended: silence!

*Brutus.* Be patient till the last.

Romans, countrymen, and lovers! hear me for my  
 cause, and be silent, that you may hear; believe me  
 for mine honor, and have respect to mine honor, that  
 you may believe; censure me in your wisdom, and  
 awake your senses, that you may the better judge.  
 If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of  
 Caesar's, to him I say that Brutus' love to Caesar

was no less than his. If then that friend demand why Brutus rose against Caesar, this is my answer: Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more. Had you rather Caesar were living, and die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live all free men? As Caesar loved me, I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honor him: but, as he was ambitious, I slew him. There is tears for his love; joy for his fortune; honor for his valor; and death for his ambition. Who is here so base that would be a bondman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so rude that would not be a Roman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so vile that will not love his country? If any, speak; for him have I offended. I pause for a reply.

*All.* None, Brutus, none.

*Brutus.* Then none have I offended. I have done no more to Caesar than you shall do to Brutus. The question of his death is enrolled in the Capitol; his glory not extenuated wherein he was worthy, nor his offenses enforced for which he suffered death.

*Enter ANTONY and others, with CAESAR'S body.*

Here comes his body, mourned by Mark Antony: who, though he had no hand in his death, shall receive the benefit of his dying, a place in the commonwealth; as which of you shall not? With this I depart—that, as I slew my best lover for the good of Rome, I have the same dagger for myself when it shall please my country to need my death.

*All.* Live, Brutus! live, live!

*First Citizen.* Bring him with triumph home unto his house.

*Second Citizen.* Give him a statue with his ancestors.

*Third Citizen.* Let him be Caesar.

*Fourth Citizen.* Caesar's better parts  
Shall be crowned in Brutus.

*First Citizen.* We'll bring him to his house with shouts and clamors.

*Brutus.* My countrymen,—

*Second Citizen.* Peace, silence! Brutus speaks.

*First Citizen.* Peace, ho!

*Brutus.* Good countrymen, let me depart alone,

And for my sake stay here with Antony.

Do grace to Caesar's corpse, and grace his speech

Tending to Caesar's glories, which Mark Antony,

By our permission, is allowed to make.

I do entreat you, not a man depart,

Save I alone, till Antony have spoke.

*First Citizen.* Stay, ho! and let us hear Mark Antony.

*Third Citizen.* Let him go up into the public chair;

We'll hear him.—Noble Antony, go up.

*Antony.* For Brutus' sake, I am beholding to you.

[*Goes up.*]

*Fourth Citizen.* What does he say of Brutus?

*Third Citizen.* He says, for Brutus' sake,

He finds himself beholding to us all.

*Fourth Citizen.* 'Twere best he speak no harm of Brutus here.

*First Citizen.* This Caesar was a tyrant.

*Third Citizen.* Nay, that's certain:

We're blessed that Rome is rid of him.

*Third Citizen.* Peace! let us hear what Antony can say.

*Antony.* You gentle Romans—

*Citizens.* Peace, ho! let us hear him.

*Antony.* Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears:

I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.

The evil that men do lives after them,

The good is oft interred with their bones;

So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus

Hath told you Caesar was ambitious.

If it were so, it was a grievous fault,—

And grievously hath Caesar answered it.

Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest—

For Brutus is an honorable man;

So are they all, all honorable men—

Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.

- He was my friend, faithful and just to me :  
 But Brutus says he was ambitious ;  
 And Brutus is an honorable man.  
 He hath brought many captives home to Rome,  
 Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill :  
 Did this in Caesar seem ambitious ?  
 When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept :  
 Ambition should be made of sterner stuff.  
 Yet Brutus says he was ambitious ;  
 And Brutus is an honorable man.  
 You all did see that on the Lupercal  
 I thrice presented him a kingly crown,  
 Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition ?  
 Yet Brutus says he was ambitious ;  
 And, sure, he is an honorable man.  
 I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,  
 But here I am to speak what I do know.  
 You all did love him once, not without cause ;  
 What cause withholds you, then, to mourn for him ?  
 O judgment, thou art fled to brutish beasts,  
 And men have lost their reason !—Bear with me ;  
 My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,  
 And I must pause till it come back to me.
- First Citizen.* Methinks there is much reason in his say-  
 ings.
- Second Citizen.* If thou consider rightly of the matter,  
 Caesar has had great wrong.
- Third Citizen.* Has he, masters ?  
 I fear there will a worse come in his place.
- Fourth Citizen.* Marked ye his words ? He would not  
 take the crown ;  
 Therefore 'tis certain he was not ambitious.
- First Citizen.* If it be found so, some will dear abide it.
- Second Citizen.* Poor soul ! his eyes are red as fire with  
 weeping.
- Third Citizen.* There's not a nobler man in Rome than  
 Antony.
- Fourth Citizen.* Now mark him, he begins again to  
 speak.

*Antony.* But yesterday the word of Caesar might  
Have stood against the world; now lies he there,  
And none so poor to do him reverence.  
O masters! if I were disposed to stir  
Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage,  
I should do Brutus wrong, and Cassius wrong,  
Who, you all know, are honorable men.  
I will not do them wrong; I rather choose  
To wrong the dead, to wrong myself and you,  
Than I will wrong such honorable men.  
But here's a parchment with the seal of Caesar—  
I found it in his closet—'tis his will:  
Let but the commons hear this testament  
(Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read),  
And they would go and kiss dead Caesar's wounds,  
And dip their napkins in his sacred blood;  
Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,  
And, dying, mention it within their wills,  
Bequeathing it as a rich legacy  
Unto their issue.

*Fourth Citizen.* We'll hear the will. Read it, Mark Antony.

*Citizens.* The will, the will! we will hear Caesar's will.

*Antony.* Have patience, gentle friends; I must not read it:

It is not meet you know how Caesar loved you.  
You are not wood, you are not stones, but men;  
And, being men, hearing the will of Caesar,  
It will inflame you, it will make you mad.  
'Tis good you know not that you are his heirs;  
For, if you should, O, what would come of it!

*Fourth Citizen.* Read the will! we'll hear it, Antony;  
You shall read us the will! Caesar's will!

*Antony.* Will you be patient? Will you stay a while?  
I have o'ershot myself, to tell you of it.  
I fear I wrong the honorable men

Whose daggers have stabbed Caesar! I do fear it.

*Fourth Citizen.* They were traitors! Honorable men!

*Citizens.* The will! the testament!

*Second Citizen.* They were villains, murderers. The will! Read the will!

*Antony.* You will compel me, then, to read the will?

Then make a ring about the corpse of Caesar,

And let me show you him that made the will.

Shall I descend? And will you give me leave?

*Citizens.* Come down. [*He comes down.*]

*Second Citizen.* Descend.

*Third Citizen.* You shall have leave.

*Fourth Citizen.* A ring! stand round.

*First Citizen.* Stand from the hearse; stand from the body.

*Second Citizen.* Room for Antony!—most noble Antony!

*Antony.* Nay, press not so upon me; stand far off.

*Several Citizens.* Stand back! room! bear back!

*Antony.* If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.

You all do know this mantle: I remember

The first time ever Caesar put it on;

'Twas on a summer's evening, in his tent,

That day he overcame the Nervii.

Look! in this place ran Cassius' dagger through.

See what a rent the envious Casca made!

Through this the well-beloved Brutus stabbed;

And as he plucked his cursed steel away,

Mark how the blood of Caesar followed it,

As rushing out of doors, to be resolved

If Brutus so unkindly knocked, or no;

For Brutus, as you know, was Caesar's angel:

Judge, O you gods, how dearly Caesar loved him!

This was the most unkindest cut of all;

For when the noble Caesar saw him stab,

Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms,

Quite vanquished him. Then burst his mighty heart;

And in his mantle muffling up his face,

Even at the base of Pompey's statue,

Which all the while ran blood, great Caesar fell.

O, what a fall was there, my countrymen!

Then I, and you, and all of us fell down,

Whilst bloody treason flourished over us.  
 O, now you weep, and I perceive you feel  
 The dint of pity: these are gracious drops.  
 Kind souls, what, weep you when you but behold  
 Our Caesar's vesture wounded? Look you here,  
 Here is himself, marred, as you see, with traitors.

*First Citizen.* O piteous spectacle!

*Second Citizen.* O noble Caesar!

*Third Citizen.* O woeful day!

*Fourth Citizen.* O traitors, villains!

*First Citizen.* O most bloody sight!

*Second Citizen.* We will be revenged.

*Citizens.* Revenge—about—seek—burn—fire—kill—slay,  
 —let not a traitor live!

*Antony.* Stay, countrymen.

*First Citizen.* Peace there! hear the noble Antony.

*Second Citizen.* We'll hear him, we'll follow him, we'll  
 die with him.

*Antony.* Good friends, sweet friends, let me not stir you  
 up

To such a sudden flood of mutiny.

They that have done this deed are honorable:

What private griefs they have, alas, I know not,  
 That made them do 't; they're wise and honorable,  
 And will, no doubt, with reasons answer you.

I come not, friends, to steal away your hearts:

I am no orator, as Brutus is;

But, as you know me all, a plain blunt man,  
 That love my friend; and that they know full well  
 That gave me public leave to speak of him.

For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,  
 Action, nor utterance, nor the power of speech,  
 To stir men's blood: I only speak right on;

I tell you that which you yourselves do know;  
 Show you sweet Caesar's wounds, poor, poor dumb  
 mouths,

And bid them speak for me: but were I Brutus,  
 And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony  
 Would ruffle up your spirits, and put a tongue

In every wound of Caesar, that should move  
The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny.

*Citizens.* We'll mutiny.

*First Citizen.* We'll burn the house of Brutus.

*Third Citizen.* Away, then! come, seek the conspirators.

*Antony.* Yet hear me, countrymen; yet hear me  
speak.

*Citizens.* Peace, ho! hear Antony; most noble Antony.

*Antony.* Why, friends, you go to do you know not  
what.

Wherein hath Caesar thus deserved your loves?

Alas, you know not:—I must tell you, then.

You have forgot the will I told you of.

*Citizens.* Most true; the will;—let's stay, and hear the  
will.

*Antony.* Here is the will, and under Caesar's seal.

To every Roman citizen he gives,

To every several man, seventy-five drachmas.

*Second Citizen.* Most noble Caesar! We'll revenge his  
death.

*Third Citizen.* O royal Caesar!

*Antony.* Hear me with patience.

*All.* Peace, ho!

*Antony.* Moreover, he hath left you all his walks,

His private arbors and new-planted orchards,

On this side Tiber—he hath left them you,

And to your heirs forever, common pleasures,

To walk abroad and recreate yourselves.

Here was a Caesar! when comes such another?

*First Citizen.* Never, never!—Come, away, away!

We'll burn his body in the holy place,

And with the brands fire the traitors' houses.

Take up the body.

*Second Citizen.* Go fetch fire.

*Third Citizen.* Pluck down benches.

*Fourth Citizen.* Pluck down forms, windows, anything.

[*Exeunt Citizens with the body.*]

*Antony.* Now let it work. Mischief, thou art afoot,

Take thou what course thou wilt!



The trial scene, from *The Merchant of Venice*:

*Scene*—A Court of Justice. *Present*—The DUKE, the Magnificoes, ANTONIO, BASSANIO, GRATIANO, SALERIO, and others.

*Duke.* What, is Antonio here?

*Antonio.* Ready, so please your grace.

*Duke.* I am sorry for thee: thou art come to answer  
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch  
Uncapable of pity, void and empty  
From any dram of mercy.

*Antonio.* I have heard  
Your grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify  
His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate  
And that no lawful means can carry me  
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose  
My patience to his fury, and am armed  
To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,  
The very tyranny and rage of his.

*Duke.* Go one, and call the Jew into court.

*Salerio.* He is ready at the door: he comes, my lord.

*Enter SHYLOCK*

*Duke.* Make room, and let him stand before our face.—  
Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,  
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice  
To the last hour of act; and then 'tis thought  
Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange  
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty;  
And where thou now exact'st the penalty,  
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,  
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,  
But, touched with human gentleness and love,  
Forgive a moiety of the principal;  
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,  
That have of late so huddled on his back,  
Enow to press a royal merchant down

And pluck commiseration of his state  
 From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,  
 From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never trained  
 To offices of tender courtesy.

We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

*Shylock.* I have possessed your grace of what I purpose,

And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn

To have the due and forfeit of my bond.

If you deny it, let the danger light

Upon your charter and your city's freedom.

You'll ask me, why I rather choose to have

A weight of carrion flesh than to receive

Three thousand ducats. I'll not answer that;

But, say it is my humor: is it answered?

What if my house be troubled with a rat,

And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats

To have it baned? What, are you answered yet?

Some men there are love not a gaping pig;

Some, that are mad if they behold a cat;

Some, when they hear the bagpipe: for affection,

Mistress of passion, sways it to the mood

Of what it likes or loathes. Now, for your answer:

As there is no firm reason to be rendered,

Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;

Why he, a harmless necessary cat;

Why he, a woollen bagpipe; but of force

Must yield to such inevitable shame

As to offend, himself being offended;

So can I give no reason, nor I will not,

More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing

I bear Antonio, that I follow thus

A losing suit against him. Are you answered?

*Bassanio.* This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,

T' excuse the current of thy cruelty.

*Shylock.* I am not bound to please thee with my answers.

*Bassanio.* Do all men kill the things they do not love?

*Shylock.* Hates any man the thing he would not kill?

*Bassanio.* Every offense is not a hate at first.

*Shylock.* What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee twice?

*Antonio.* I pray you, think you question with the Jew:

You may as well go stand upon the beach  
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;  
You may as well use question with the wolf  
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;  
You may as well forbid the mountain pines  
To wag their high tops and to make no noise,  
When they are fretten with the gusts of heaven;  
You may as well do anything most hard,  
As seek to soften that—than which what's harder?—  
His Jewish heart: therefore, I do beseech you,  
Make no more offers, use no further means,  
But with all brief and plain conveniency  
Let me have judgment and the Jew his will.

*Bassanio.* For thy three thousand ducats here is six.

*Shylock.* If every ducat in six thousand ducats

Were in six parts and every part a ducat,

I would not draw them—I would have my bond.

*Duke.* How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?

*Shylock.* What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?

The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,  
Is dearly bought; 'tis mine and I will have it.

If you deny me, fie upon your law!

There is no force in the decrees of Venice.

I stand for judgment: answer; shall I have it?

*Duke.* Upon my power I may dismiss this court,

Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,

Whom I have sent for to determine this,

Come here to-day.

*Salerio.* My lord, here stays without

A messenger with letters from the doctor,

New come from Padua.

*Duke.* Bring us the letters; call the messenger.

*Enter NERISSA, dressed like a lawyer's clerk*

*Duke.* Came you from Padua, from Bellario?

## CHOICE SPECIMENS FROM THE DRAMAS 8511

*Nerissa.* From both, my lord. Bellario greets your grace. [*Presenting a letter.*]

*Bassanio.* Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?

*Shylock.* To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.

*Gratiano.* Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,  
Thou mak'st thy knife keen; but no metal can,  
No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness  
Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee?

*Shylock.* No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.

*Duke.* This letter from Bellario doth commend  
A young and learned doctor to our court.  
Where is he?

*Nerissa.* He attendeth here hard by,  
To know your answer, whether you'll admit him.

*Duke.* With all my heart. Some three or four of you  
Go give him courteous conduct to this place.

*Enter PORTIA, dressed like a doctor of laws.*

Give me your hand. Come you from old Bellario?

*Portia.* I did, my lord.

*Duke.* You are welcome; take your place.

Are you acquainted with the difference  
That holds this present question in the court?

*Portia.* I am informed thoroughly of the cause.

Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?

*Duke.* Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.

*Portia.* Is your name Shylock?

*Shylock.* Shylock is my name.

*Portia.* Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;

Yet in such rule that the Venetian law

Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.—

You stand within his danger, do you not? [*To Antonio.*]

*Antonio.* Ay, so he says.

*Portia.* Do you confess the bond?

*Antonio.* I do.

*Portia.* Then must the Jew be merciful.

*Shylock.* On what compulsion must I? Tell me that.

- Portia.* The quality of mercy is not strained,  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
Upon the place beneath; it is twice blest—  
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes;  
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes  
The throned monarch better than his crown;  
His scepter shows the force of temporal power,  
The attribute to awe and majesty,  
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;  
But mercy is above this scepter'd sway;  
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,  
It is an attribute to God himself;  
And earthly power doth then show likest God's  
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,  
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,  
That, in the course of justice, none of us  
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;  
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render  
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much  
To mitigate the justice of thy plea,  
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice  
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.
- Shylock.* My deeds upon my head! I crave the law,  
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.
- Portia.* Is he not able to discharge the money?
- Bassanio.* Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;  
Yea, twice the sum. If that will not suffice,  
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,  
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart.  
If this will not suffice, it must appear  
That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you,  
Wrest once the law to your authority:  
To do a great right, do a little wrong,  
And curb this cruel devil of his will.
- Portia.* It must not be. There is no power in Venice  
Can alter a decree established:  
'Twill be recorded for a precedent,  
And many an error by the same example  
Will rush into the state. It cannot be.

*Shylock.* A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!

O wise young judge, how I do honor thee!

*Portia.* I pray you, let me look upon the bond.

*Shylock.* Here 'tis, most reverend doctor, here it is.

*Portia.* Shylock, there's thrice thy money offered thee.

*Shylock.* An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven.

Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?

No, not for Venice.

*Portia.* Why, this bond is forfeit;

And lawfully by this the Jew may claim

A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off

Nearest the merchant's heart.—Be merciful:

Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.

*Shylock.* When it is paid according to the tenor.

It doth appear you are a worthy judge;

You know the law, your exposition

Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law,

Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,

Proceed to judgment. By my soul I swear

There is no power in the tongue of man

To alter me: I stay here on my bond.

*Antonio.* Most heartily I do beseech the court

To give the judgment.

*Portia.* Why, then, thus it is:

You must prepare your bosom for his knife.

*Shylock.* O noble judge! O excellent young man!

*Portia.* For the intent and purpose of the law

Hath full relation to the penalty

Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

*Shylock.* 'Tis very true: O wise and upright judge!

How much more elder art thou than thy looks!

*Portia.* Therefore lay bare your bosom.

*Shylock.* Ay, his breast:

So says the bond—doth it not, noble judge?—

“Nearest his heart:” those are the very words.

*Portia.* It is so. Are there balance here to weigh

The flesh?

*Shylock.* I have them ready.

*Portia.* Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge

To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

*Shylock.* Is it so nominated in the bond?

*Portia.* It is not so expressed; but what of that?

'Twere good you do so much for charity.

*Shylock.* I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.

*Portia.* You, merchant, have you anything to say?

*Antonio.* But little: I am armed and well prepared—

Give me your hand, Bassanio. Fare you well!

Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;

For herein Fortune shows herself more kind

Than is her custom: it is still her use

To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,

To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow

An age of poverty; from which lingering penance

Of such misery doth she cut me off.

Commend me to your honorable wife;

Tell her the process of Antonio's end;

Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death;

And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge

Whether Bassanio had not once a love.

Repent but you that you shall lose your friend,

And he repents not that he pays your debt;

For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,

I'll pay it presently with all my heart.

*Bassanio.* Antonio, I am married to a wife

Which is as dear to me as life itself;

But life itself, my wife, and all the world,

Are not with me esteemed above thy life:

I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all

Here to this devil, to deliver you.

*Portia.* Your wife would give you little thanks for that,

If she were by, to hear you make the offer.

*Gratiano.* I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love:

I would she were in heaven, so she could

Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

*Nerissa.* 'Tis well you offer it behind her back;

The wish would make else an unquiet house.

*Shylock.* [*Aside*] These be the Christian husbands. I  
have a daughter;

Would any of the stock of Barrabas

Had been her husband rather than a Christian!—

[*Aloud*] We trifle time: I pray thee, pursue sentence!

*Portia.* A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine.

The court awards it, and the law doth give it.

*Shylock.* Most rightful judge!

*Portia.* And you must cut this flesh from off his breast.

The law allows it, and the court awards it.

*Shylock.* Most learned judge! A sentence! Come, prepare!

*Portia.* Tarry a little; there is something else.

This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;

The words expressly are "a pound of flesh:"

Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;

But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed

One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods

Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate

Unto the state of Venice.

*Gratiano.* O upright judge!—Mark, Jew:—O learned judge!

*Shylock.* Is that the law?

*Portia.* Thyself shalt see the act:

For, as thou urgest justice, be assured

Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.

*Gratiano.* O learned judge!—Mark, Jew:—a learned judge!

*Shylock.* I take this offer, then: pay the bond thrice

And let the Christian go.

*Bassanio.* Here is the money.

*Portia.* Soft!

The Jew shall have all justice; soft!—no haste:—

He shall have nothing but the penalty.

*Gratiano.* O Jew! an upright judge, a learned judge!

*Portia.* Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.

Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou less nor more

But just a pound of flesh. If thou cutt'st more

Or less than a just pound, be it but so much

As makes it light or heavy in the substance,

Or the division of the twentieth part



Of one poor scruple—nay, if the scale do turn  
But in the estimation of a hair—

Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.

*Gratiano.* A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!

Now, infidel, I have you on the hip.

*Portia.* Why doth the Jew pause?—Take thy forfeiture.

*Shylock.* Give me my principal, and let me go.

*Bassanio.* I have it ready for thee; here it is.

*Portia.* He hath refused it in the open court:

He shall have merely justice and his bond.

*Gratiano.* A Daniel, still say I, a second Daniel!

I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

*Shylock.* Shall I not have barely my principal?

*Portia.* Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,

To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.

*Shylock.* Why, then the devil give him good of it!

I'll stay no longer question.

*Portia.* Tarry, Jew.

The law hath yet another hold on you.

It is enacted in the laws of Venice,

If it be proved against an alien

That by direct or indirect attempts

He seek the life of any citizen,

The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive

Shall seize one half his goods; the other half

Comes to the privy coffer of the state;

And the offender's life lies in the mercy

Of the duke only, 'gainst all other voice.

In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st;

For it appears, by manifest proceeding,

That indirectly and directly too

Thou hast contrived against the very life

Of the defendant; and thou hast incurred

The danger formerly by me rehearsed.

Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the duke.

*Gratiano.* Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang thyself.

And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,

Thou hast not left the value of a cord;

Therefore thou must be hanged at the state's charge.

*Duke.* That thou shalt see the difference of our spirits,  
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it.

For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;  
The other half comes to the general state,  
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

*Portia.* Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.

*Shylock.* Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:  
You take my house when you do take the prop  
That doth sustain my house; you take my life  
When you do take the means whereby I live.

*Portia.* What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

*Gratiano.* A halter gratis; nothing else, for God's sake.

*Antonio.* So please my lord the duke and all the court

To quit the fine for one half of his goods,  
I am content, so he will let me have  
The other half in use, to render it,  
Upon his death, unto the gentleman  
That lately stole his daughter:  
Two things provided more, that, for this favor,  
He presently become a Christian;  
The other, that he do record a gift,  
Here in the court, of all he dies possessed,  
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

*Duke.* He shall do this, or else I do recant  
The pardon that I late pronounced here.

*Portia.* Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou say?

*Shylock.* I am content.

*Portia.* Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

*Shylock.* I pray you, give me leave to go from hence;  
I am not well. Send the deed after me,  
And I will sign it.

*Duke.* Get thee gone, but do it.

*Gratiano.* In christening shalt thou have two godfathers.  
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,  
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font.

[Exit *Shylock*.]

*Duke.* Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.

*Portia.* I humbly do desire your grace of pardon:

I must away this night toward Padua,  
And it is meet I presently set forth.

*Duke.* I am sorry that your leisure serves you not.

Antonio, gratify this gentleman,

For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.

*[Exeunt Duke and his train.]*

*Bassanio.* Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend

Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted

Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof,

Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,

We freely cope your courteous pains withal.

*Antonio.* And stand indebted, over and above,

In love and service to you evermore.

*Portia.* He is well paid that is well satisfied;

And I, delivering you, am satisfied,

And therein do account myself well paid:

My mind was never yet more mercenary.

I pray you, know me when we meet again:

I wish you well, and so I take my leave.



ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE





